

MAX overload!

04



CHEATS!

We Got 'em!

NEWS!

SPEED RACER,
Nintendo's **PROJECT**
REALITY

COMICS!

REVIEWS!

SONIC 3
SIM CITY 2000
SKITCHIN'
CASTLEVANIA

Time to
jam with

ToeJam & Earl™

Lemmings™

Lunacy!



Greendog™

faces
Killer Krabs!



CHOMP



WIN!

SUPER
EMPIRE
STRIKES
BACK
for the SNES

neanderthal
nonsense
with

Chuck rock™

SUPER STAR THE **EMPIRE STRIKES BACK** WARS™



USE THE FORCE!



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STRIPS

LEMMINGS 09



Outrageous adventures with the reckless rodents

Story **DICK HANSOM**
Art **GRAHAM MANLEY**
Lettering **ELLIE DE VILLE**

TOEJAM & EARL 23



Earthbound escapades with the dudes from Planet Funkatron

Story **ANNE CAULFIELD**
Art **WOODROW PHOENIX**

CHUCK ROCK 39



Stoneage stunts with the caveman who gives near-derthals a bad name

Story **CEFN RIDOUT**
Art **DAVID LYTLETON**

GREENDOG 55



Surf's up with the beached beach bum

Story **IAN CARNEY**
Art **ILYA**

COUNTDOWN

MAX overlook! 02

The latest, the greatest gaming news from all corners of the globe. Not a lot of people know that.

SYSTEM overload!

We review:

18 RAINBOW BELL ADVENTURES

SONIC 3 20

32 CASTLEVANIA

SKITCHIN' 34

36 SIM CITY 2000

MAX overview!

BETWEEN THE TOES 47

We talk to the creators of ToeJam & Earl

51 GET REAL

We enthuse about the new 3DO system

MAX giveaway!

5 copies of **Super Empire Strikes Back** for the SNES to be won!

MAX over-reaction! 63

Readers Letters



We look at the new 3DO System on page 51

NEWS

No news is good news, so the famous saying goes, in which case it might not be wise to turn over the next few pages, for they're jam-packed with the latest scoops and scandals in the wonderful world of video games, brought to you in living Technicolor by **Amaya Lopez**.

UNIVERSITY CHALLENGE

Would you believe it? The educational institutions have finally recognised the creative input and technological wizardry that goes into developing computer and video games, because from next September you'll be able to study for a games degree at Middlesex University. The course, which is called *The Design and Production of Interactive Games*, will lead to either a Bachelors or Masters Degree and it is hoped that other universities will be

prompted to develop similar courses if it proves a success. So far it's had a great deal of support from major publishing houses, who have agreed to provide work experience and give lectures on the games industry, in the hope of creating a new generation of budding talent. Specialist gaming schools have been around in Japan for quite some time, so who knows? It might not be too long now before the UK develops a new line in hedgehogs and Brooklyn plumbers. **M**

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X CERTIFICATE

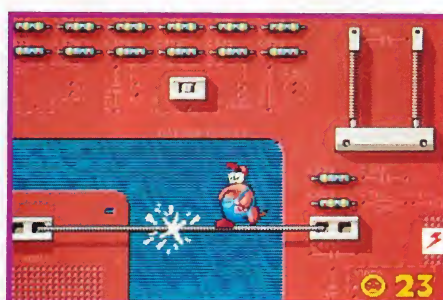
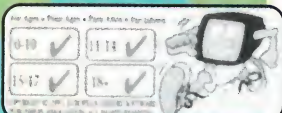
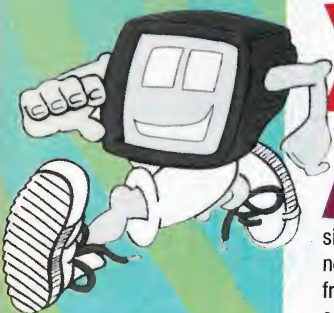
After the hullabaloo over **Night Trap** and **Mortal Kombat**, the whole of Europe will finally be following suit and adopting a similar games classification to that of the US. The new ratings on games will come into operation from 1 May this year and will be based on the recommendations from the *Video Standards Council*. The ratings have been classified into four distinct age groups: 4-10 years; 11-14 years; 15-17 years and over 18s. Games of all formats will carry a sticker, displaying these different categories which will have ticks along side the age groups they are

suitable for. UK law, however, exempts games from classification and the snag is that it will be up to publishers to decide for themselves how appropriate their games are for the different ages. So it's ticks all round then? Well not entirely, as the games industry has taken it into their own hands to introduce such a scheme in order to prevent the government from stepping in and making a hash of it all. Censorship is a risky business at the best of times, but maybe this will make publishers think twice before dishing out another soft porn strip poker game. **M**

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SMAART VARK

A game about a TV repair-aardvark isn't the kind of news you hear every day — but that's the *Mega Drive* title those *Codemasters* have got up their sleeves at the moment. **Smaartvark**, for it is he, will come round to your pad quick as lightning when your telly's on the blink. And you won't get any of that "Sorry, love, can't do nothing for you on this one" nonsense neither — he'll actually get into the entrails of your television set to really sort out the problem. Basically each level is a TV channel and our Smaarty has to get rid of all the nasty little bugs which cause TVs to malfunction and flicker. To do this, he employs his rather handy snout which he uses in hoover-like fashion. He also has to sort out the inhabitants of TV land and the movies: the likes of B-movie monsters, scientists and vampires. (Let's hope Jeremy Beadle's there.) There's a neat two player option to boot — but sadly we'll have to wait a while yet to see **Smaartvark** — until the autumn to be precise. **M**



PROJECT REALITY TAKES CART OPTION

Nintendo has announced that its new 64-bit video system, codenamed Project Reality, will run with mega-memory cartridges and not with compact discs as was anticipated. The new silicon technology which has been developed by *Silicon Graphics* will be housed in the special Nintendo cartridge, whose size will contain five to six times the memory of current 16-bit Nintendo games. The new machine promises breakthrough levels in speed, 3D 24-bit colour graphics and high resolution video, coupled with CD-quality sound. Its capacity so far has been compared to the power of 100 PCs, all linked and working together in one machine. If this may seem a little unbelievable, it's worth noting that Nintendo's development partner, *Silicon Graphics*, helped film makers create the stunning visual effects in *Jurassic Park*. The Project Reality system is set to retail for under \$250 in the States (that's about £170) but don't get too excited, since an arcade model of the system won't be appearing till much later in the year. **M**

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SUB-TERRANIA

Sega is currently developing a futuristic shoot 'em up entitled *Sub-Terrania* for the *Mega Drive*. The plot revolves around an underground mining colony on a satellite which is ruthlessly attacked by hostile alien forces. Unenviably, your task is to defeat the attackers and rescue as many of the poor trapped miners as possible whilst flying through the crystal caverns of the mining sites. There are grotesque monsters and lethal cannon laser fire to contend with to name but a couple of small hindrances to your mission. Your spaceship rotates through 360 degrees and is subject to gravitational pull, making it a nightmare to control at the best of times as you try to track down your special weapons, fuel depots and shield rechargers. There are nine manic levels in total and the game should be available in April. **M**



MAGIC BOY

If you like cutesy arcade adventures, then *Magic Boy* on the *SNES* could well be for you. It tells the unfortunate tale of a wizard whose young apprentice has accidentally magicked him into a large blue elephant. So it's your task to put things right, however fetching blue elephants might sound, and to journey through four exotic worlds in order to do so. En route you're likely to meet all manner of strange beings including Clarence the Clam and Frieda the Fish – yes, the kind of creatures which sound like they'd appeal to three year olds. But be consoled, for this sounds a large game, with 64 levels and 32 hidden bonus levels in total. *Magic Boy* will hit the *Super Nintendo* this spring. **M**



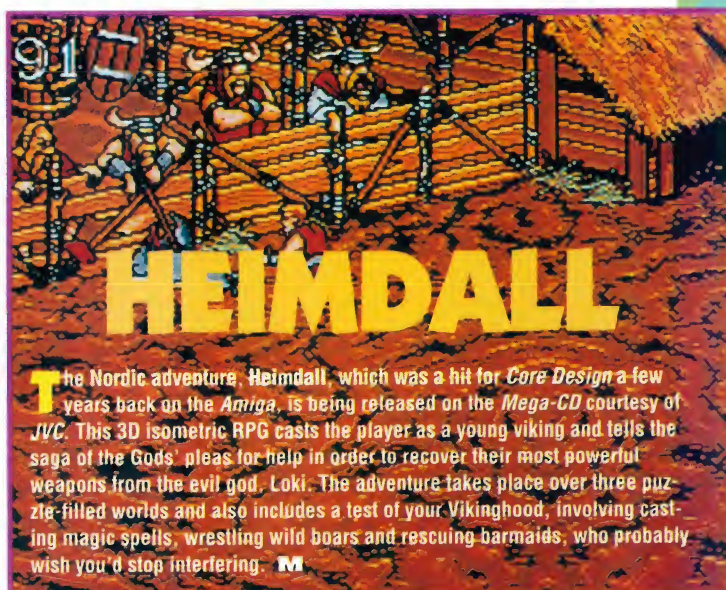
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PRIZE FIGHTER

Already available in the States is a new boxing sim for the *Mega-CD*. Using a first person perspective viewpoint to make it more realistic (you only see your arms and your gloves on-screen while fighting), the game has been produced by *Digital Pictures* and been directed by Ron Stein, who choreographed the fight scenes in *Raging Bull* and *Rocky III*, and shot entirely in black and white. Whether the monochrome is for effect or because the machine can't actually handle full screen colour video properly is another matter, but it undeniably lends a certain ambience to the proceedings. Real boxers were filmed and digitised into the game and a neat touch is that the screen shakes when you take a hit. The game also features appearances by boxing legend referee Jean Laballe and announcer Michael Buffer. *Prize Fighter* will be released in the UK in the Spring. **M**



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The Nordic adventure, *Heimdall*, which was a hit for *Core Design* a few years back on the *Amiga*, is being released on the *Mega-CD* courtesy of *JVC*. This 3D isometric RPG casts the player as a young viking and tells the saga of the Gods, pleas for help in order to recover their most powerful weapons from the evil god, *Loki*. The adventure takes place over three puzzle-filled worlds and also includes a test of your Vikinghood, involving casting magic spells, wrestling wild boars and rescuing barmaids, who probably wish you'd stop interfering. **M**

MAX
overhook!

MAX overhook!

JAGUAR XJ 220

Everyone remembers *Core Design's Jaguar* from either the Amiga, Mega Drive or Mega-CD unless you spent the last few years in prison — and if you did, this new SNES version is for you: it's essentially a driving game in a top range (and obviously stolen) Jag where you race around the world on 32 different tracks. The reason you're doing this is for the wonga, and you can use your cash prizes to repair all the major parts of your car. There's also an option to enable you to design your own getaway racing course, using a track editor, and a split screen mode for some manic two player action. *Jaguar* will be available some time this summer from JVC. **M**



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SHANGHAI II

If you're a puzzle freak or avid Mah Jong fan you'll be delighted to hear that *Activision* has plans to release *Shanghai II: Dragon's Eye* on the Mega Drive and SNES. For those of you not familiar with the game, it consists of matching pairs of like-patterned Chinese tiles in order to make them disappear from the screen. Once the screen is clear, then you've won the game. The sequel features 13 different tile layouts and if you think this is your bag, you'll have to hang on a while as no UK release date as yet has been announced. **M**



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POPEYE THE SAILOR MAN

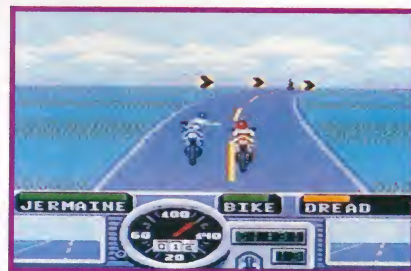
Yes, the spinach-munching, bicep-flexing *Popeye* is soon to appear on the SNES and Mega Drive along with all the old faves from the popular cartoon.

This action adventure romp finds our Pop on a dangerous mission to rescue Olive Oyl and Swee' Pea, who have been kidnapped by the Evil Sea Hag. He'll be scouring six treacherous lands in his search for the gals, with the added boon of some simultaneous two player action. The games will be available on import some time in May and as yet no plans have been announced for an official UK release. **M**



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ROAD RASH REVISITED



Great news for *Master System* and *Game Gear* owners is that the brilliant *Road Rash* will be hitting their machines this month. The violent, no-holds barred motor bike jaunt was one of the most exciting racing games around when it was released by *Electronic Arts* a few years back. Now *US Gold* has done the 8-bit conversions and if they're any near as good as the ones of *RoboCod* and *Star Wars*, we should be in for a treat. **M**

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RACK AND STACK

Californian company, *ASG Technologies* is set to launch its *Video Jukebox*. A hardware peripheral, not of the Wurlitzer variety, the VJ, as it will be known from here on, allows the player to electronically store up to six games cartridges on-line. There are six buttons, each of which corresponds to each game stored and, what's more, an infinite number of VJs can be networked together to enable you to store a colossal number of games (the maximum in multiples of six of course). Apart from claiming that amongst other things, kids will "absolutely dig the name" (puke), the gadget also makes for a far less violent family environment, as game carts will be neatly stacked away and not left on the living room carpet for Aunt Madge to trip over. The VJ is being developed for the *Sega Mega Drive* and *Mega-CD*, the *SNES* and the *Atari Jaguar*. Sega versions will be out in April and the SNES and Atari VJs will follow some time in the summer, all priced \$50 (about £35). The question is just how lazy are we becoming if want a gadget that will take the stress out of fingers pulling a cart out of a games machine and replacing it with another one. Only time will tell when the VJs are let loose on Europe some time in the autumn. **M**



MAX
overhook!

MAX overkill

Ah, the **ACTIVATOR** – the white elephant of the *Sega* stable. For those of you not in the know about this particular piece of kit, suffice to say that it's a hypersensitive mat peripheral that allows you to abandon your joystick skills and use your limbs to move the characters on-screen. This may sound like fun initially, but it really does look very nerdy when you see people flinging themselves around on a doormat in an attempt to punch some baddie in the groin. The *Activator* was launched in the US last year and so far there seem to be no plans to bring it to Europe. But *Sega* isn't giving up on its new baby – yet. Greatest Heavyweights and Eternal Champions are the newest additions to the *Activator* game list.



SPEED RACER

The cult 60s Manga style cartoon, **Speed Racer**, is coming to a console near you thanks to the folk at *Accolade*. The games have been designed for both the *Mega Drive* and *SNES*, although the two are slightly different games, with the *SNES* version being aimed at a younger audience. The *Mega Drive* game, officially called **Speed Racer in: The Challenge for Racer X**, will include all the popular characters from the cartoon series including Speed Racer himself (of course), his gal, Trixie, his bro' Spridle, his pa, Pops Racer and the secretive Racer X who, unbeknownst to Speedy, only happens to be his older brother and also an undercover Interpol agent (how unbelievable can you get?). In the game you choose to play either Speed racing his super Mach 5 car or Racer X in his Formula 1 car, presumably in between bugging the Russian embassy, through seven different levels. The levels are based on scenarios from the original TV series and in order to win a race, there are 16 nasty villains to thrash including Captain Terror and Snake Oiler. Lucky then that there are a host of power-ups to collect en route – from gripper tyres to help negotiate that annoying oil-slick, to chopper blades, to slice through obstacles. In addition there's also two player split-screen action to add an even bigger thrill to the proceedings.

The *SNES* version entitled, **Speed Racer in: My Most Dangerous Adventures**, looks fairly similar, apart from the fact that a touch of side-scrolling beat 'em up action has been included. Both games feature the theme soundtrack of the cartoon "Go Speed Racer Go" and will be out in April. **M**



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MAX factoid

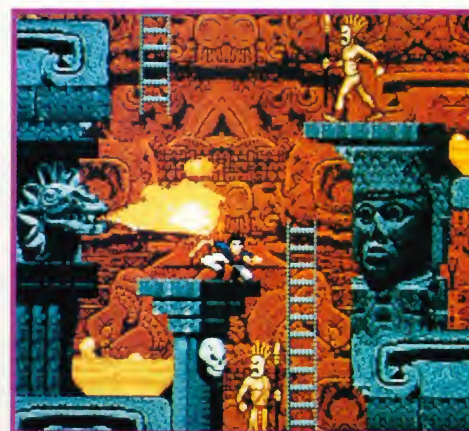
Whatever will the Americans think of next? Californian-based company, *Heartbeat*, has launched a *Mega Drive* personal trainer. Essentially a black box, the machine links up to any brand of aerobic fitness equipment and your TV, and accepts a specially developed *Mega Drive* cart. This cartridge contains a game which reflects how well you are performing on your exercise bike or whatever. For example, *Outback Joey*, which is bundled with the *HeartBeat Personal Trainer*, is a journey through the plains of Australia where you get to play a happy, bouncy kangaroo called Joey. If you happen to pedal too slowly, just think of the consequences: curtains for poor Joey. Should you fear getting carried away and doing yourself an injury, you need not worry, for the unit comes with a pulse monitor which is neatly attached to your ear. The system also records and stores your exercise sessions so that you can chart your progress.

If you already own a *Mega Drive*, then you can get away with just buying the *HeartBeat Catalyst* which plugs into your machine and also comes with a copy of *Outback Joey*. Many more games are planned kicking off with the release of *NHLPA Hockey* and *PGA Golf Tour II* in the Spring. Don't think we'll be spared this marvellous blend of technology and sport either – the machines will hit Europe this autumn. Mind you, exercise is pretty snorey at the best of times, so you could do a lot worse than play a video game to while away the tedium.

Whatever will the Americans think of next? Californian-based company, *Heartbeat*, has



tion from the forthcoming movie of the same name starring well-known action-meister, Jean-Claude Van Damme. As such, a variety of gaming exploits is promised: a clever blend of platform, beat 'em up and shoot 'em up action over nine frantic levels. There will also be a smart 3D bonus level making good use of Mode 7. A neat feature will be that after playing through the first three levels the player will then be able to progress to the level of his/her choice. The beefiness of the lead character is currently being created using a whopping 200 frames of animation. *Timecop*'s launch is set to coincide with the film so stay tuned for more news. **M**



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TIME COP

That top *Dark Horse* comic hero, **Time Cop**, is to make his first gaming appearance in his own game – to be published by *JVC* in the autumn. The *Super Nintendo* title is to take its inspira-

There's a whole host of new comic-book inspired titles coming to a screen near you soon. One to watch out for is *Dark Horse Comics'* very own top title, *The Mask*, currently being developed by *THQ*. Interestingly, this is a joint venture with *New Line Cinema* who are releasing the film version, and the game will be on sale to coincide with the film's launch this summer. *The Mask* tells the tale of Stanley Ipkiss, a bank clerk whose life completely changes when he discovers an ancient mask with supernatural powers (but if you're a reader of *DHI's* late, lamented *Total Carnage* comic, you know this already). In Jekyll and Hyde fashion, the *Mask* turns Stanley into a smart, wisecracking superhero whenever he wears it. Film effects and movie footage will be incorporated into the game, which will appear on both *Sega* and *Nintendo* systems.



THQ is also developing a game of the cult manga comic, *Akira* for the SNES, GameBoy, Mega Drive and Game Gear. The game will take players on a race through Neo-Tokyo in the 21st century, with the option of assuming the roles of either Kaneda or Tetsuo as they take on the likes of evil gang members, mad scientists, giant sewer rats and even each other. *Akira* should be available some time in the Autumn (and if you can't wait till then, you can always read the comic strip which started it all in *DHI's Manga Mania* every month). Also scheduled for release from THQ then, is Spielberg's *SeaQuest DSV* for Sega and Nintendo 16-bit and corresponding handhelds. Your task will be to control the massive *SeaQuest* in a series of death-defying underwater missions which include putting paid to drug smugglers, terrorists and pirates. **M**



ASTERIX

AND THE GREAT RESCUE

Oh the Gaul of it — **Asterix** and his chums are to be back in a new adventure on the *Mega Drive*, packed with magical potions, wild boars and of course, their traditional arch-enemies, those pesky Romans. Comic-book heroes, Asterix and Obelix, rush to the rescue of two of their chums who have been kidnapped. Your task is to guide them through six main levels and over 50 zones, journeying through enchanted forests, Alpine valleys and Roman galleys, shouting “Vive la France!” at every opportunity. **Asterix and The Great Rescue** is out now on the *Mega Drive* and will follow on the *Game Gear* in May. **M**

SHADOWRUN

The world of Jake Armitage and his Shadowrunner antics are to be brought to the *Mega Drive* in the Spring. This cyberpunk role-playing title was extremely popular when it was released on the *Super Nintendo* last year. The action, which takes place in the year 2053, is set over three 3D worlds spanning the futuristic city of Seattle, the electronic world of FuturSpace and a sinister complex of high-tech corporate

offices (you can't get much scarier than that last one). There are a wealth of different missions to fulfill and you have to choose and pay a team of 10 Shadowrunners in order to accomplish them. On the *SNES*, **Shadowrun** was thankfully an RPG which was easy to get into and you didn't have to be an anorak to enjoy it either. Fingers crossed then that the standard of graphics and gameplay on the *Mega Drive* live up to the original. **M**

MAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAX

Virgin is developing the game of the forthcoming Disney movie, **The Lion King** for both the *Mega Drive* and *Super Nintendo*. The film, which Disney hopes will prove a worthy successor to **Aladdin**, stars a new character: a lioncube by the name of Simba. But this is not any old lioncube: Simba's

blue-blooded royalty, and the story tells of his life as he grows up trying to free himself of royal trappings. The game is due for release in the States next summer and it's hoped that the game will be ready around the same time. Whilst we're on the subject of film licences, the company is also developing a Bruce Lee **Dragon** game for all Sega systems in time for the summer and Sly Stallone's **Demolition Man** on **Mega Drive** and **Mega-CD**, to be released around the same time. **Heart Of The Alien** (**Another World Parts I and II** on one CD) for the **Mega-CD** will out in April with you taking on the role of Lester's chum, Buddy, in the new game, whose task is to save his fellow villagers from the clutches of an evil warden.



MAX overlook!

MAX factoid

Sport Sciences Inc. of America have designed a funny little gizmo which allows you to practise golf swings in front of the telly. The contraption, which is going through life by the name of **TeeV Golf** plugs into the port of your **Mega Drive**. Then, using the special **TeeV Golf** club, you can take normal golf swings in the privacy of your own living room. Of course, you need to have the games to play on it and the machine is compatible with **EA's PGA Golf I and II**. It's already on sale in the States and apparently is to be sold in Europe later on this year. Can't wait.

THE CATGIRL'S ON THE PROWL

ON VIDEO

21st MARCH

1994

catgirl:

nuku-
nuku.

9 OUT OF 10 ANDROIDS (WHO EXPRESSED

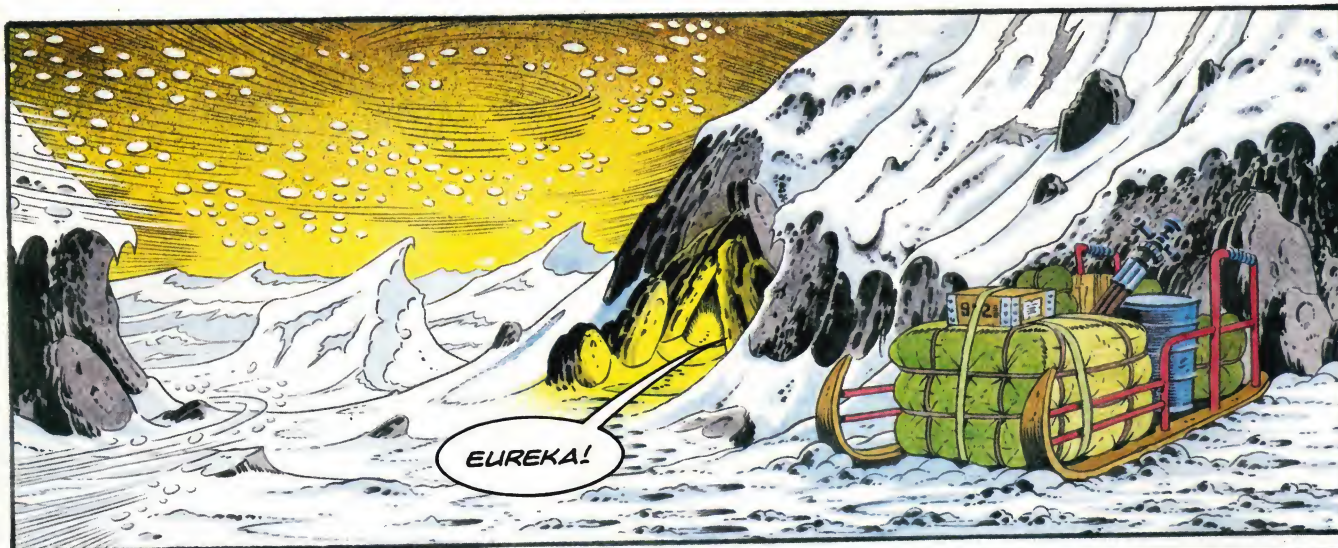
A PREFERENCE) SAY THEY PREFER

Nuku-Nuku.

TO ANY OTHER BRAND OF CATLIKE ROBOT

© CRUSADER VIDEO





Lemmings

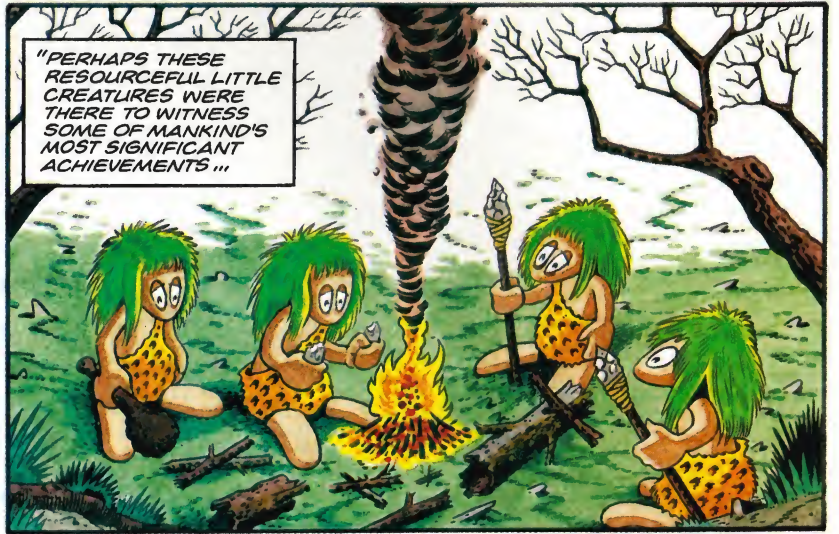
More tales of
the Reckless
Rodents by
DICK HANSOM
Writer
**GRAHAM
MANLEY**
Artist
ELLIE DE VILLE
Letterer



"TO THINK! PREHISTORIC MAN MAY NOT HAVE BEEN THE ONLY SPECIES TO MASTER THE USE OF PRIMITIVE TOOLS ..."



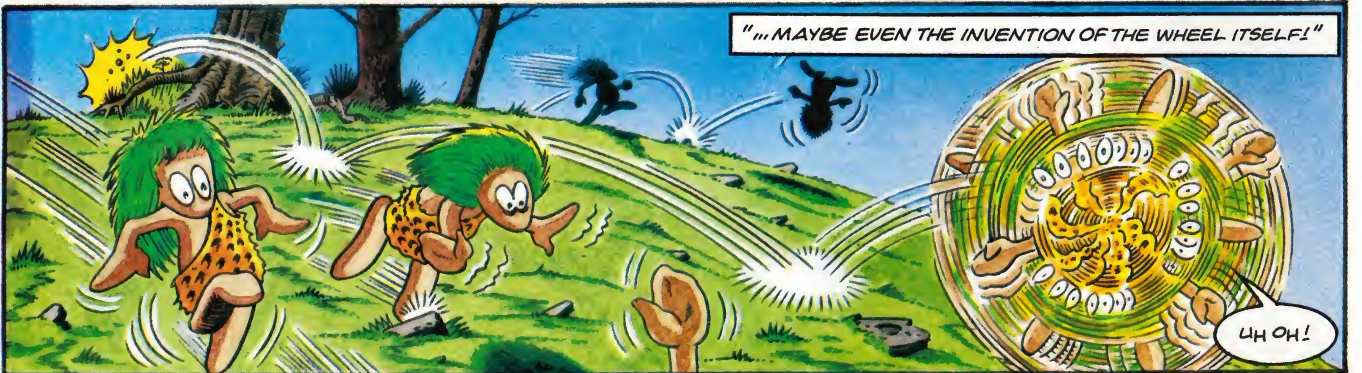
"PERHAPS THESE RESOURCEFUL LITTLE CREATURES WERE THERE TO WITNESS SOME OF MANKIND'S MOST SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENTS ..."



"...THE DISCOVERY OF FIRE ..."



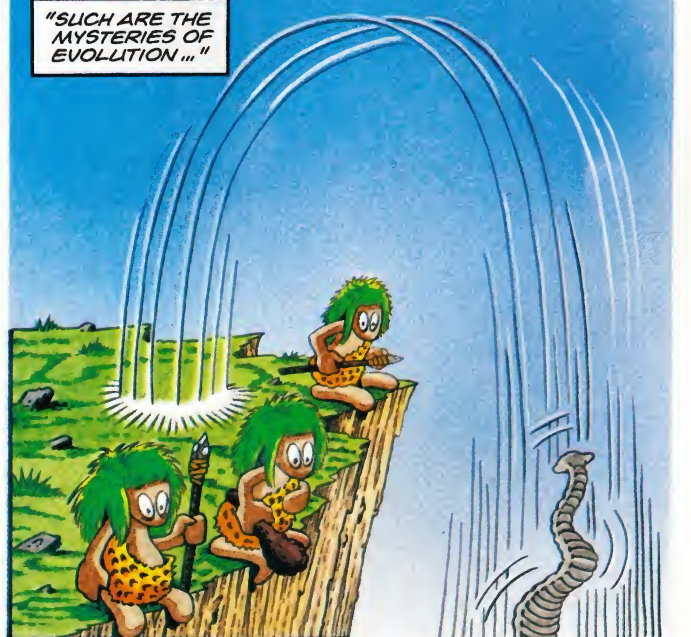
"...MAYBE EVEN THE INVENTION OF THE WHEEL ITSELF!"

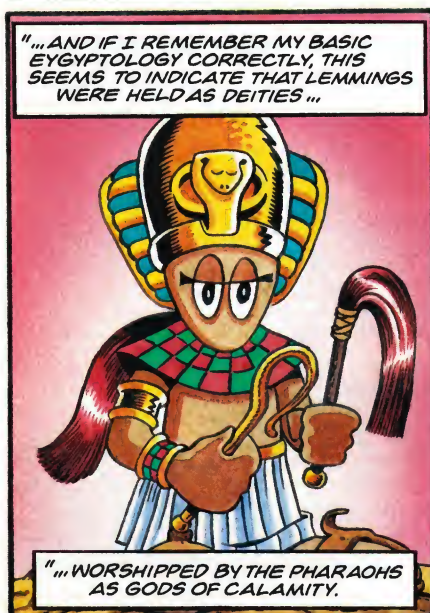


"BUT WHY SHOULD THESE TINY, DEFENCELESS RODENTS HAVE SURVIVED THROUGHOUT THE AGES, WHEN FAR STURDIER ANIMALS HAVE SUCCEEDED TO EXTINCTION?"



"SUCH ARE THE MYSTERIES OF EVOLUTION ..."

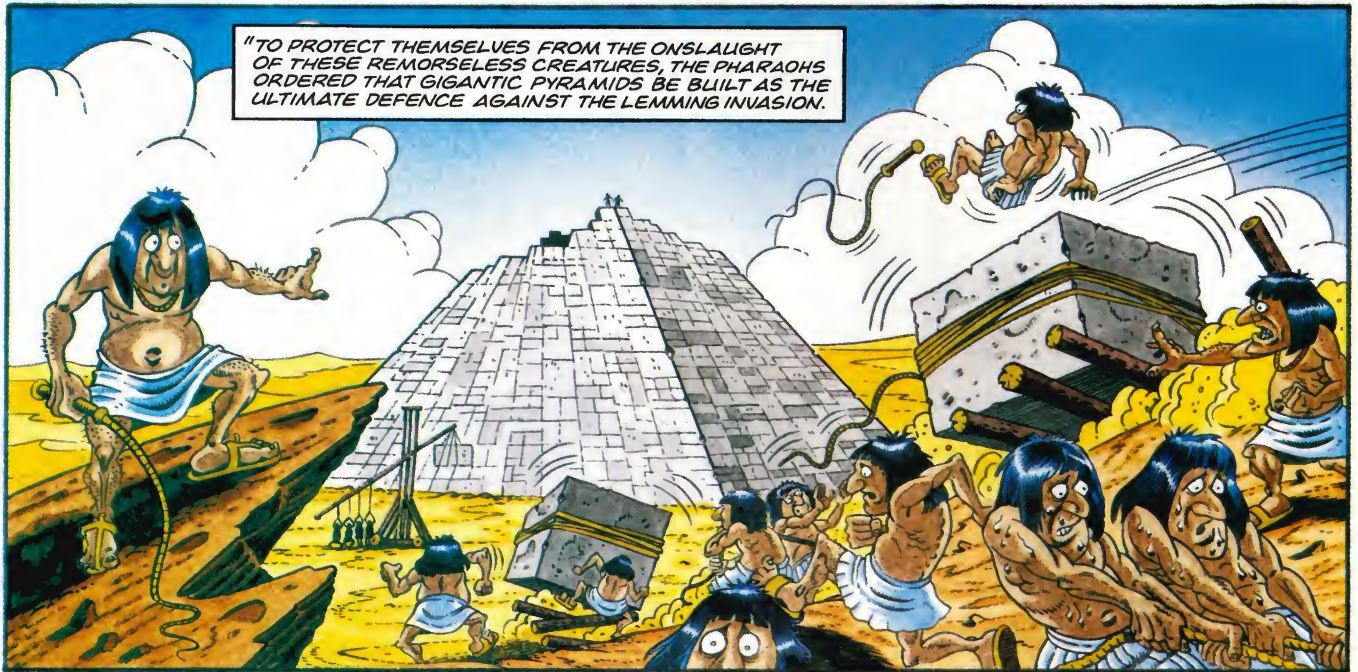




Having problems with Level 3 Tricky: A ladder Would Be Handy?
A few simple steps (ho, ho) should get you onto the next level ...



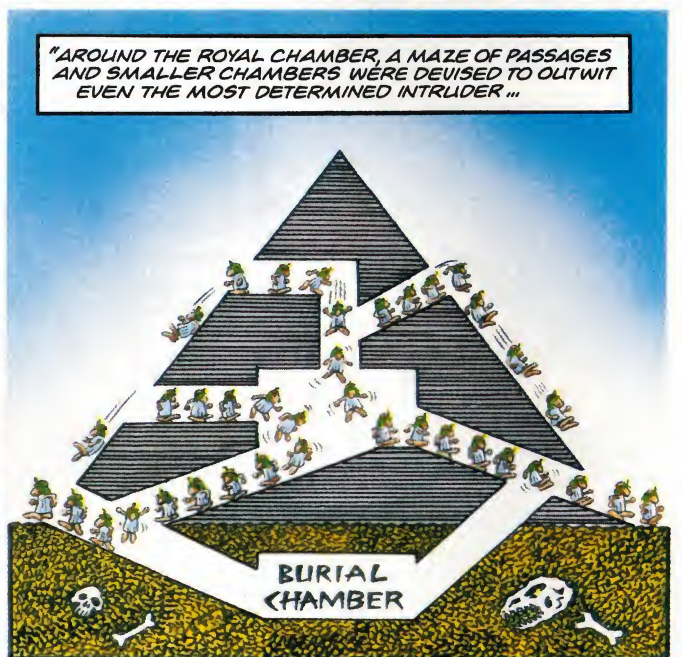
Change your second Lemming into a Blocker almost as soon as he drops from the door ...



"TO PROTECT THEMSELVES FROM THE ONSLAUGHT OF THESE REMORSELESS CREATURES, THE PHARAOHS ORDERED THAT GIGANTIC PYRAMIDS BE BUILT AS THE ULTIMATE DEFENCE AGAINST THE LEMMING INVASION."



"THE PHARAOH AND HIS HIGHEST RANKING PRIESTS WOULD CONCEAL THEMSELVES IN THE BURIAL CHAMBERS, ALONG WITH ENOUGH FOOD AND TREASURE TO SUSTAIN THEM FOR MONTHS, PERHAPS YEARS, UNTIL THE LEMMING MENACE HAD PASSED."



"AROUND THE ROYAL CHAMBER, A MAZE OF PASSAGES AND SMALLER CHAMBERS WERE DEvised TO OUTWIT EVEN THE MOST DETERMINED INTRUDER ..."



"BUT FOR REASONS WHICH HAVE YET TO BE SATISFACTORILY EXPLAINED..."



"THE PHARAOHS WERE NEVER TO EMERGE AGAIN..."



"...AND THE RULERS OF THESE GREAT DYNASTIES WERE FOREVER ENTOMBED INSIDE THEIR MASSIVE MONUMENTS."

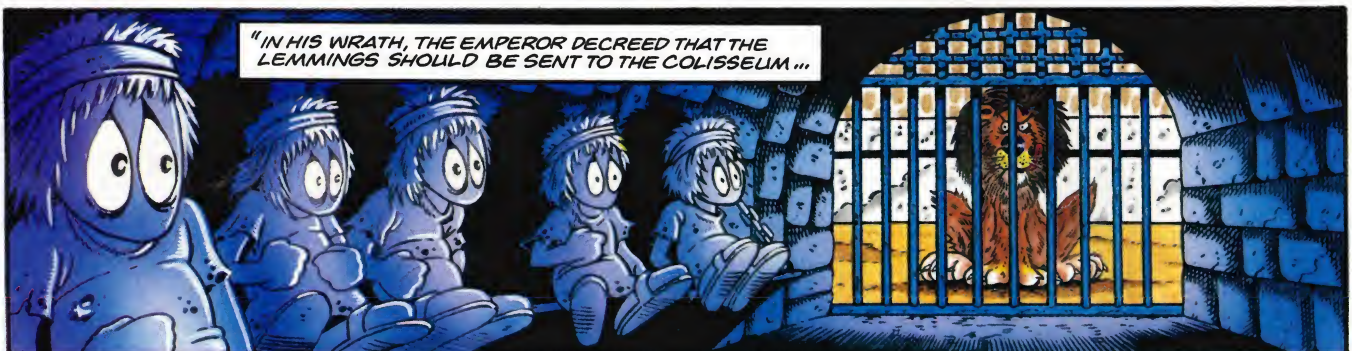


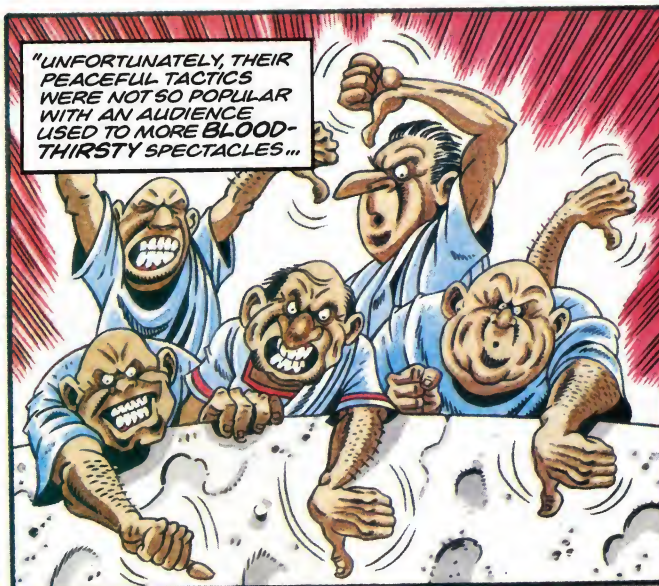
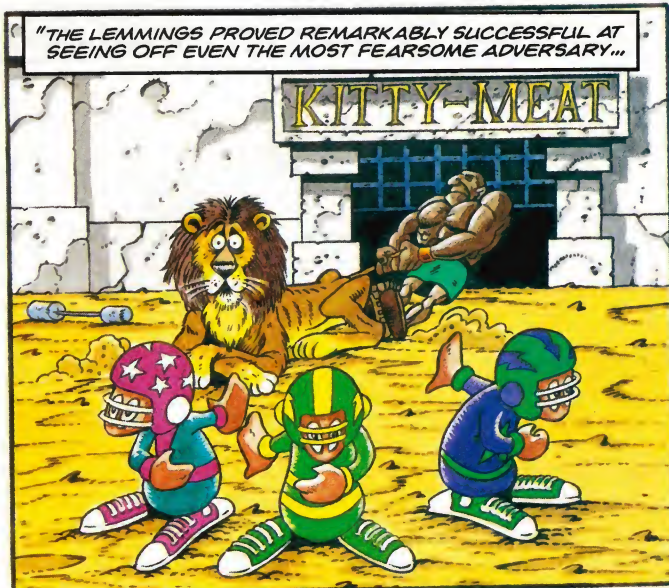
... Then turn your first Lemming into a Digger,
so he starts to dig down ...



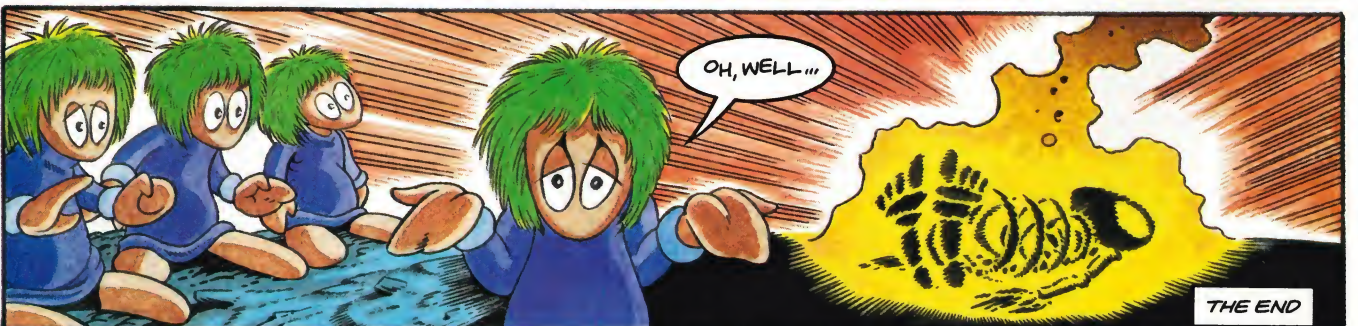
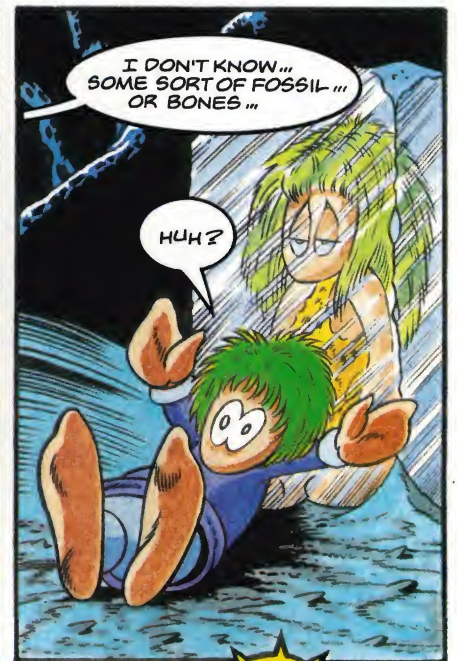
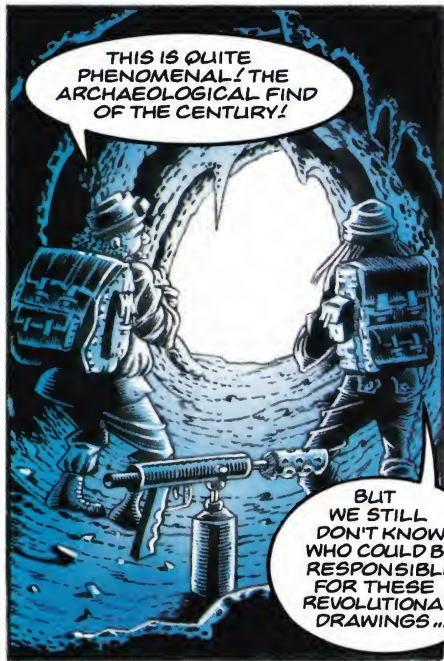


... Quickly change your third Lemming into a Blocker
so the rest of the Lems are trapped ...





... When the Digger is about a third of the way down, turn him into a Miner, so he digs diagonally across before dropping onto the log bridge below ...



... Turn him into a Builder straight away, until he's built a bridge right up to the top mound on the right. Blow up the Blocker on the right and you're home and dry!

PRIZE LINES

● YOUR CHANCE TO WIN FANTASTIC PRIZES JUST BY ●
● CALLING OUR TELEPHONE NUMBERS BELOW ●

YOU CAN WIN THIS FANTASTIC MOUNTAIN BIKE

WIN A SEGA MEGADRIVE

THE MORE TIMES YOU CALL THE BETTER CHANCE OF WINNING

NO TIE BREAKERS

DIAL 0891 111104

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TWO THOUSAND POUNDS COULD BE YOURS
CALL OUR HOTLINE NOW: 0891 111105

EASY TO ENTER WITH NO NASTY TIE BREAKERS

WIN THE TOP 50 C.D.s

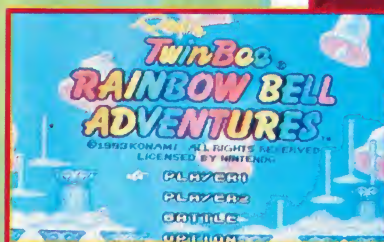
DIAL 0891 111102

DIAL 0891 111106

WIN AN AMSTRAD P.C.

Max. duration 7.5 mins with multi-choice answers. If you don't pay the phone bill get permission from who does. Calls cost 3p a min. cheap rate or 4p a min. at all other times. Max cost £3.68. Rules/winners free by post from EarthBound, Enterprise House, High Street, Newcastle NE15 8LN. Winner picked at random on closing dates 20/6/94 to be notified by post.

OVER THE RAINBOW



GAMEPLAY

88%

Intuitive controls, fun to play

GRAPHICS

90%

Sickeningly cute, but well-animated and well-detailed

SOUND

80%

Again, sickeningly cute music and voices

ADDICTIVENESS

80%

Doesn't quite have that MSG Quotient

MAX
overall

83%



Above: The robots doing a passable impression of the Mr. Men. Right: The nefarious Doctor Warmon. Below: Princess Melora – is she heroine or fabric conditioner?



All you know is that Dr Shinamon, your grandfather and the world's most brilliant inventor of high-tech pastel robots, has a rival - the evil Doctor Warmon. Warmon has created an army of robots with which he plans to take over the world. Call me Columbo, but it's possible he's responsible.

OUR HEROES

There are three characters for you to choose from - Twinbee, Winbee or Gwinbee (and they say that naming children is a lost art). They're all kiddy robot-pilots who don't know the meaning of fear (educational underfunding having ensured that their school can't afford a dictionary).

Patrick McCarthy once had an unhappy affair with Zippy from Rainbow, who left him and ran off with Quasimodo, so we gave him a copy of RAINBOW BELL ADVENTURES for the SNES to try to make him cry.



There's a two-player option for you to play with a chum, if you can rent one: it helps if you can both stay on-screen at the same time, because otherwise one of you will get a bit bored playing blind. Oh, and there's also what must be the world's first Battle Mode to appear in a platform game.



Not since Department S has there been such a trio to combat injustice.



Above: A decidedly uncute end of level boss.

BATTLE MODE?

That's right. You fight each other in a split-screen slugfest of mindless gore that makes *Mortal Kombat* look like *Barbie Goes Shopping*... only joking. You run around one of five different levels trying to jump on each other's head, slug each other in the face, or harm each other with one of the many weapons on offer.

WEAPONS?

Yep. Konami certainly haven't skimped on the features list. You can jump on someone's head, or punch them with your fist. Once you collect the right bell power-up, you can hit them with hammers, whips or baby rattles. You can perform a power-punch which demolishes walls, floors and ceilings (most things can be battered down) or shoots bolts of power across the screen in any direction. You can do a flying attack, which also wrecks barriers and anyone who gets in your way, and which enables you to fly across whole levels if you want. Another type of bell even gives you a gun, in case everything else becomes a bit too much effort. If that wasn't enough, there are items to replenish lost vitality and mini-robots to fly with you and help kill the baddies, too.



One of the early levels even allows you to fly up so high you make it into outer space (it's worth doing, too, but I'm not telling you why). Some levels have secret doors into other areas, to which you need to find the keys before you can open them. It's all good stuff.

WHY HASN'T IT GOT A HIGHER MARK, THEN?

Well, I can't help thinking that, although there's plenty to do, a cold-blooded platform demon (and let's face it, you're all cold-blooded platform demons) will finish the game fairly quickly. There's just so much stuff to help you on your way that most of the baddies don't really pose much of a threat. End of level bosses are big and colourful, but none are strikingly original - they're all a bit "been-there-done-that". It doesn't help that Konami have provided you with infinite continues. It's very nice of them, but who can resist the temptation to use them, or the password system?

Overall then, it's a good, fun game with bright cutesy graphics, equally cute (and sometimes irritatingly nice) music and loads of good touches in the gameplay. It's fun to play and even has that weird Battle Mode, too. It might just be a little too easy for platform freaks, though.

THE CHARACTERS



TWINBEE

Twinbee is now 13 years old (yeah, and the rest) and thinks that means he can run around hitting people over the head with a hammer and get away with it because he's supposed to be cute. Let me tell you, he's 20 if he's a day and he should be in Parkhurst.



WINBEE

A female character, indistinguishable from Twinbee once she's inside the robot/spaceship hybrid. These robots all look the same to me. Like all women who know what they're doing in life, she carries a whip, and isn't afraid to use it.



GWINBEE

Another Twinbee doppelganger, but this one's claiming to be only one year old. So how do its feet reach the accelerator, then? Needless to say, it hits things with a rattle. Call me anti-children, but I always find it satisfying when this one crashes face-first.

PRINCESS MELORA

Despite having a name like a washing powder, Melora is in fact 'the symbol of people's hope,' which explains why she's never been seen in Britain. Like all Princesses, her hobbies include working out in gymnasiums, being kidnapped and being saved.



DOCTOR SHINAMON

Scientific genius, or twisted pervert who should be reported to Social Services? The creator of the robot/spaceship hybrids, he seems to take unnatural pleasure in forcing small children to work long hours in confined spaces. That's Victorian values for you. It'll be up the chimney with 'em next.



LEVELS

The levels are nicely varied in look and style, ranging from open air ones to underground caverns and icy wastes. Some of them wrap around, so that you can be heading for the exit, go too far, and find yourself back at the start again. To help you find your way around, you can summon a handy little map, which highlights the relative position of you, your playing partner, the exit and fairies. It also shows you how many bells you've collected and what keys you've found.

Other levels are just massive, with loads of little bits to explore and walls to knock down.

System: **SNES**
Publisher: **Konami**
Price: **£44.99**
On Sale: **April '94**

RETURN OF THE BLUE HEDGEHOG

"So what's so special about SONIC 3?" asked David Jerrom. "It's got an echidna in it" replied Max Overload. "Oh cool! I'll review," retorted David, "I love Mexican food" (What a clot).

Well, it had to happen, didn't it? Sonic is the *Sega* mascot, so there wasn't any way we'd get away with only two Sonic adventures (er... not counting **Sonic Spinball** and **Sonic CD**). Sure enough, the blue spiked one is back. Not only that, but he's brought his pal Tails with him (again), so you can have a chum help you out in a split-screen two-player simultaneous frenzy. But wait — there's more... there's also a brand new character. He's called Knuckles, and he's a pink echidna. (Rustling of pages of *Concise Oxford Dictionary*) *Echidna*. noun. Australian toothless burrowing egg-laying animal like hedgehog — AhHa!

In an extra whole new dimension of game-play feature, you can also get to control Sonic against his new nemesis, Knuckles in one of three competitive head to head race options — but more of that later...

After you defeated the evil Doctor Robotnik in **Sonic 2** and put paid to his robotic Death Egg, the nefarious ovoid one crash landed with his infernal machine onto the mysterious Floating Isle. Now, by dint of coincidence, this Isle is powered by those self same Chaos Emeralds — the very energy source that the evil Doctor requires to repair his armoured ship! Furthermore, the Floating Isle is the home of Knuckles — the aforementioned pink toothless burrowing (Yes, get on with it! Ed) — and by deviously weaving a web of lies, Robotnik convinces Knuckles that it is in fact Sonic who is the villain of the piece, who is invading the Floating Isle and who hopes to steal those elusive emeralds. Thus Knuckles sets out to stop Sonic and Tails, and Robotnik is free to go off rebuild his Death Egg for a new bid at world domination. Only a team



of mega hero type characters — namely Sonic and Tails — can sort out Knuckles then face up to the final confrontation with Doctor Robotnik.

The game starts with a nice animated intro that carries on from where the **Sonic 2** end sequence left off. Tails pilots a biplane with

GAMEPLAY

90%

Exceptionally playable — maybe not enough action or challenge

GRAPHICS

92%

All new improved bigger better — it's top!

SOUND

90%

Great little ditties accompany each level — brilliant sound effects too.

ADDICTIVENESS

89%

Very addictive in the short term — more so than any other Sonic title.

**MAX
overall**

92%

SYSTEM overload

SONIC 3

Sonic standing heroically on the upper wing! Suddenly Sonic spins off, reappears in yellow guise streaking across the surface of the ocean, then just as suddenly comes to grief on a rocky outcrop of the Floating Isle. The Chaos Emeralds are scattered and Knuckles enters the scene, scoops up the gems and exits stage right. Cue Sonic's biggest romp to date!

Okay, so new character, new scenario – but what else does this new Sonic outing have on offer? Well, **Sonic 3** delivers more. More sprites – the characters are bigger and more clearly defined than before; more action – the levels are over twice as big as those in **Sonic 2**; more powers ups – brand new shield powers ups and Spin Switches that alter the very landscape; more – scroll into the screen sub game antics (that's enough 'mores' Ed). As far as the levels are concerned, it isn't just a case of improved graphics and of being larger in size. They are also far more creatively crafted to deliver more gameplay than any previous Sonic title. No longer is Sonic such a linear game. You now have a bigger choice of routes to reach your objectives, more hidden goals, rooms and bonuses, and in general a better feeling that you are finding your way through a level by exploration rather than by that old inexorable progress from A to B.

Those bonuses come in the shape of a giant gold ring. Collect this and Sonic and Tails are transported to a scroll into the screen 3D level where you move forward collecting blue coloured spheres whilst avoiding red ones. Pick up a red one by mistake and you'll be dumped back into the room from which you originally teleported. Collect all the blue spheres – and the accompanying extra golden rings – and you'll be

rewarded with your very own Chaos Emerald. Although reminiscent of the 3D bonus section in **Sonic 2**, this new special stage is a welcome addition – offering impressive 3D trickery and

a challenging new element in gameplay.

New moves and features require practice to master, but all these skills will pay dividends in the battle to Robotnik. The power shields spring



He's a Robotnik end of level death machine boss. Forget one boss at the end of every third zone à la Sonic 2. This time you've got a major nasty at the end of each and every one of the twelve levels. Not only that, but they are increasingly challenging and require some smart Sonic spin work to figure out their weak spots.

BLIND DATE

Who will you choose for your blind date? Don't make your mind up yet, Chuck... Here's our Graham with a quick recap...



"Number One says a date with you would leave him in the pink. He may be out to get you, but he's toothless really. He may say he's loaded, but he's just echidning – he's likely to be the first to try to burrow a fiver from you"



You won't be hedging your bets if you pick number two, but he'll be blue if you choose anyone else. He may want to hog all your time, but you'll find yourself in a spin if you choose him."

System: **Mega Drive**
Publisher: **Sega**
Price: **£59.99**
On Sale: **24 Feb 94**

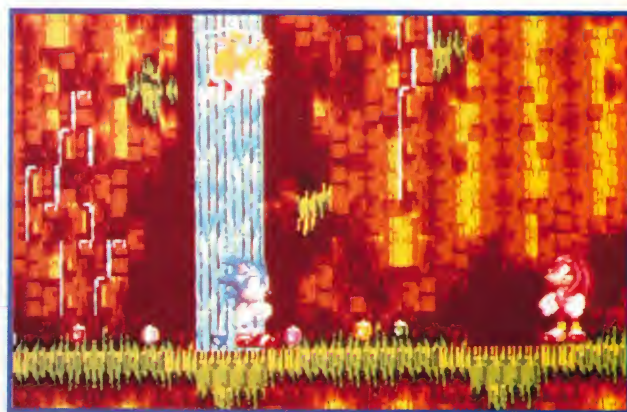


It's head to head split screen racing action in the Competition sub game. This stand alone head to head racer lets you play Sonic, Tails or Knuckles in a race against a pal or the clock.

from Sonic breaking TV sets, but each has its own distinct use and power. The Water Shield is the closest to the original Sonic shield that protects our hedgehog chum from a single hit. This shield preserves Sonic's air supply when he's under water, and also makes him invulnerable to enemies (when you tap the jump button to keep it in bounce mode) and can serve as an offensive weapon too! The Fire shield on the other hand has the ability to transform Sonic into a speeding fireball (just hit that jump button twice). He'll speed across screen taking out any of Robotnik's hench-mammals en route. Finally the Electric Shield turns Sonic into an electro-magnet. As well as protecting our hero – like all these shield varieties – from one otherwise damaging hit, this little number will also attract any neighbouring golden rings into Sonic's grasp.

Sonic 3 also offers players a stand alone two player game that makes further use of the new improved split screen action. This takes the form of a head to head speed challenge across five laps of six zones. Oh, and these zones, though themed on those of the game proper, are actually completely unique to the race game (sort of like five extra levels, if you will). It's Sonic against Knuckles in a high speed dash for cash – well, bonus speed shoes, rings etc. You can even play this racing sub game in three different variations. The Grand Prix takes you and a pal through all five of the zones on offer. The Match game lets you choose your level, and the Time Attack lets you concentrate on beating your best time for each level. You can play this as a one player game or against a friend, and you can even choose whether you want to be Sonic, Tails or Knuckles.

This game really does deliver. Even features that you may be familiar with – like the split screen Sonic and Tails gameplay in **Sonic 2** – have been revamped with better graphics and much more fluid action. It also offers for the first time a battery back-up facility



Sonic and Knuckles square up to do battle at the start of the Angel Island level. Don't be too hard on Knuckles, Sonic – he's not really a bad sort, he's just been deceived by the nefarious Doctor Robotnik.

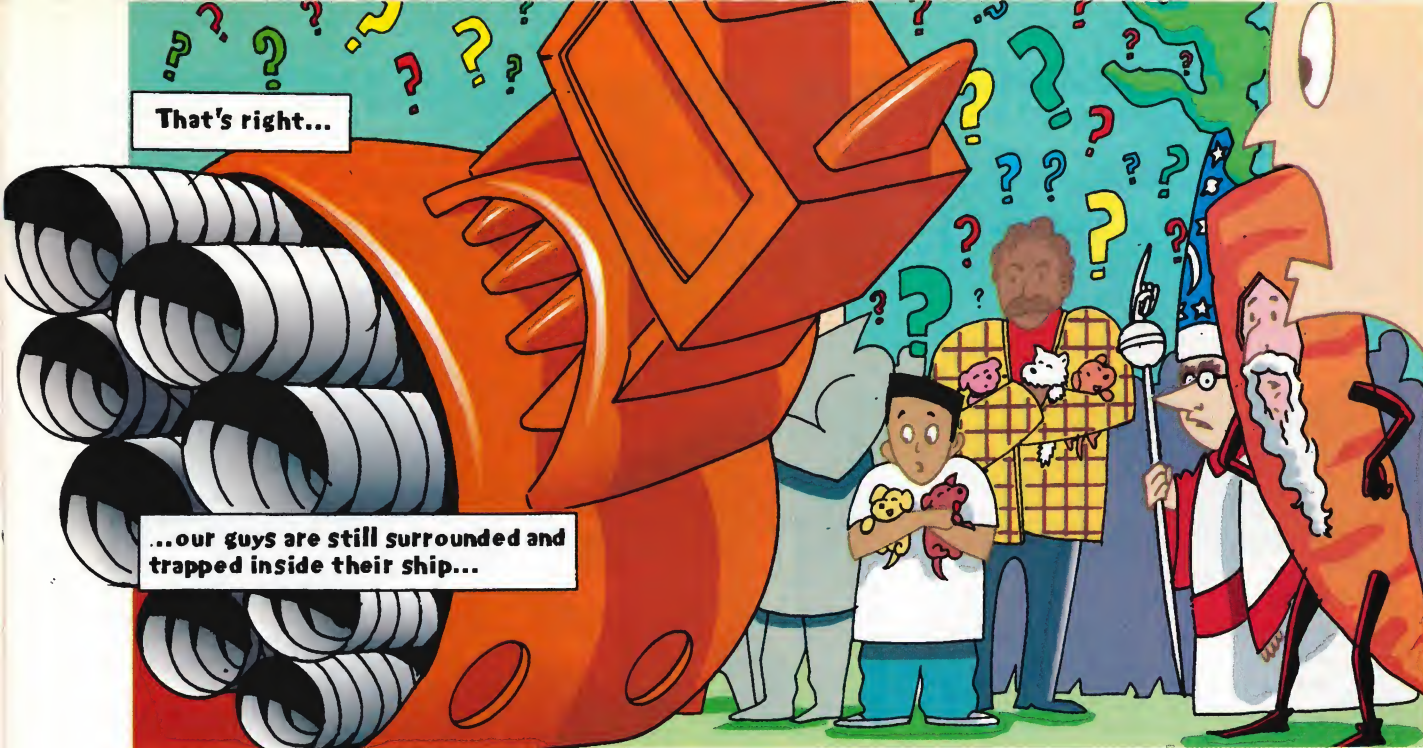
so you can save up to eight of your game positions. Sound good? Well, it is – absolutely top hole. If I was pushed to be critical, I'd probably warn anyone off who was feeling overexposed to Sega's blue spiky mammal – **Sonic 3** does have more than a smattering of deja-vu about it. Still, there's plenty of life in the character yet, most Sonic fans would love more of the same – and that having been said, when you actually sit down to play **Sonic 3** it's a much bigger and more satisfying title than any of its predecessors or indeed any of the other platformers currently doing the rounds. The only thing that stops **Sonic 3** from being the all-time top title is its price point – yep, it's one of those carts that carries the £60 price tag. Still, it is a 16 Meg cart and it should certainly give you many, many hours of gameplay. By the way, rumour has it that Sega could be planning a limited edition souped up version of **Sonic 3** with extra levels and enhanced gameplay on a 24-Meg cart too!

GUMBALL RALLY

Passing a stage marker beacon with fifty rings and Sonic will enter another bonus level. This is in the form of a room lined with trampolines on the floor and pinball style bumpers on the walls. Bounce up screen and you encounter a giant gumball machine. The idea is to strike the handle – which in turn will release a gumball bonus. Whatever is marked on the gumball dictates the bonus benefit derived from scoffing it. A **1-up** gives you an extra life, a **B** gives Sonic a random shield and so on. The only problem is that each time you strike a bumper or trampoline, it disappears, thus limiting the amount of time you have to collect the goodies. Best to watch out for the Gumball with the letters **REP** on it – this replaces one of the trampolines.



These scroll-into-the-screen 3D Special Stages are great fun. They're fast paced, technically impressive and offer a progressive challenge to keep you on your toes!



That's right...

...our guys are still surrounded and trapped inside their ship...

...with nothing to eat but the ship itself.



Yuk!



And still the strange creatures haven't come out again...



You hear that? Who's he calling strange?

Nothing strange about ME.



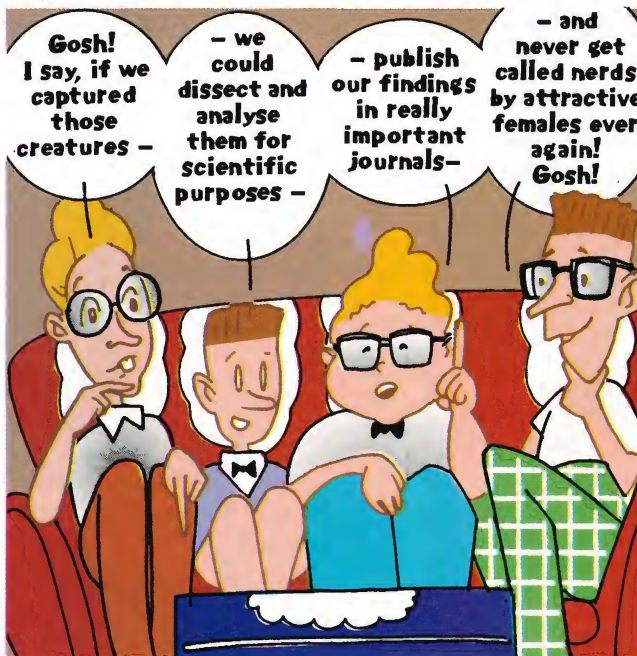
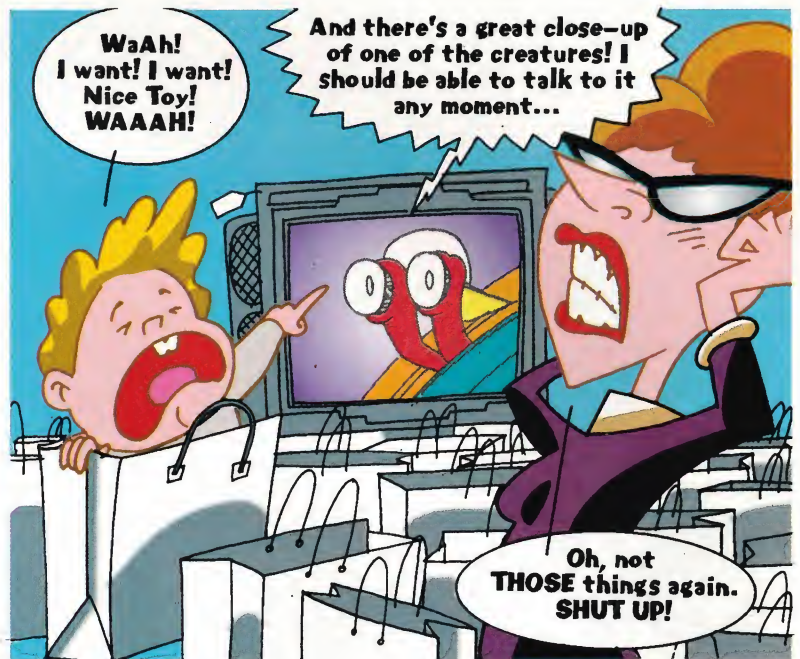
And this is really exciting! One of the creatures has been spotted **LOOKING OUT OF THE WINDOW!** We could have an interview at **ANY MOMENT!**



ToJam & Earl

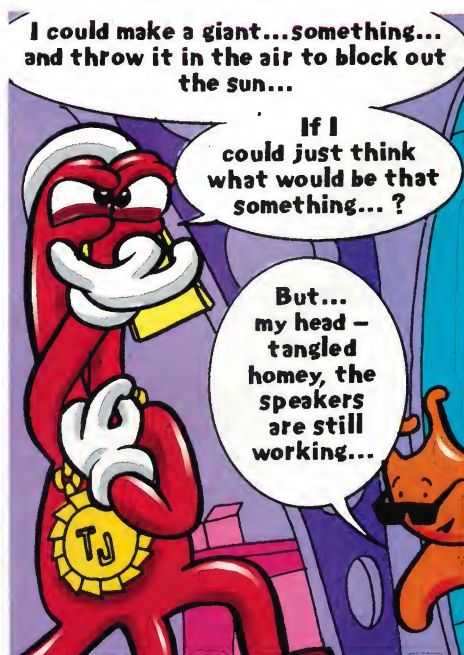
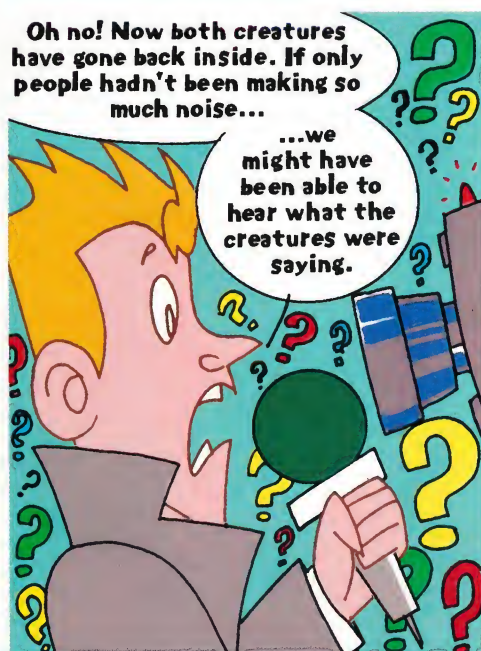
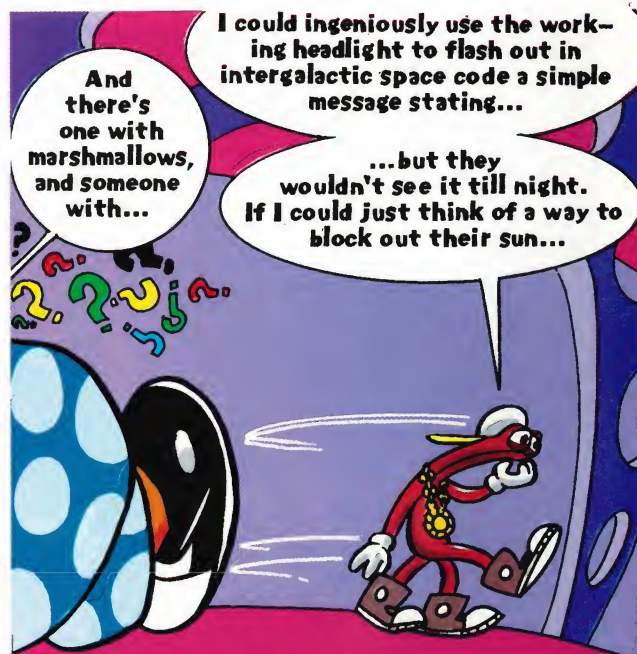
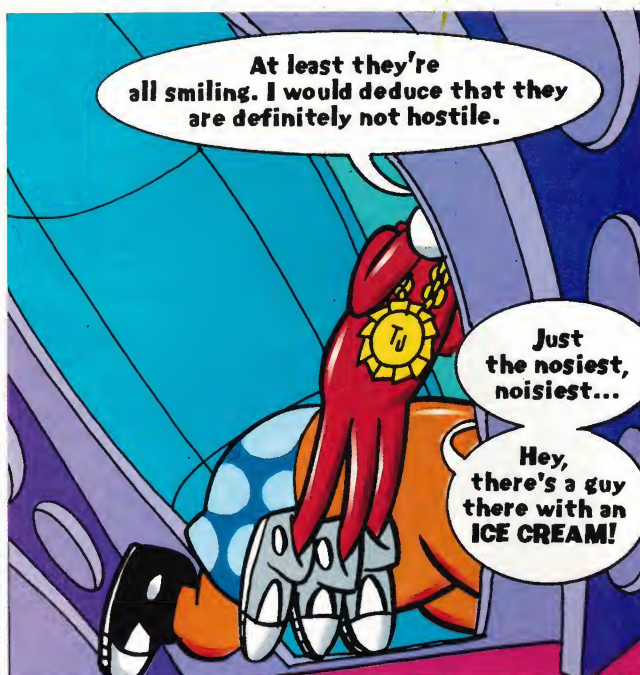
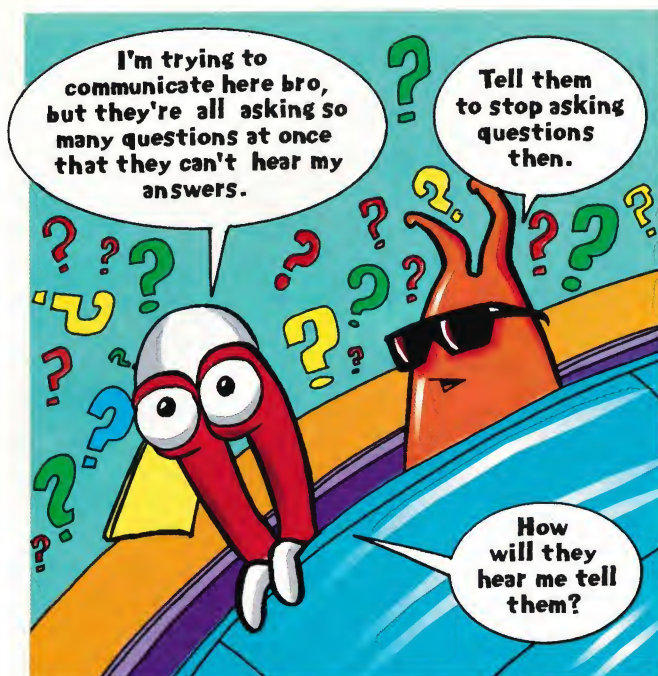
Stranded on Earth after a joy-ride from the Planet Funkatron ended in an unplanned diversion, our homeys find themselves trapped inside the Righteous Rapmaster Rocketship, with nothing to eat and hordes of extremely strange earthlings loitering outside...

ANNE CAULFIELD
Writer
WOODROW PHOENIX
Artist





Wanna know what levels to find your ship pieces on? Don't tell anyone else, but they're 2, 6, 10, 12, 15, 17, 20, 21, 23 and 25.



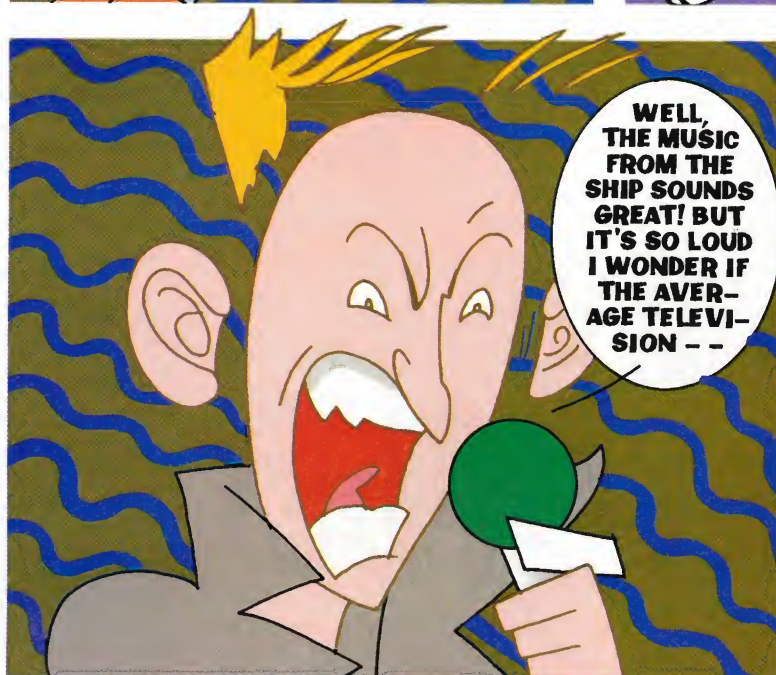


THE **LOWDEST** BLAST OF **FUNKY** FUNK...

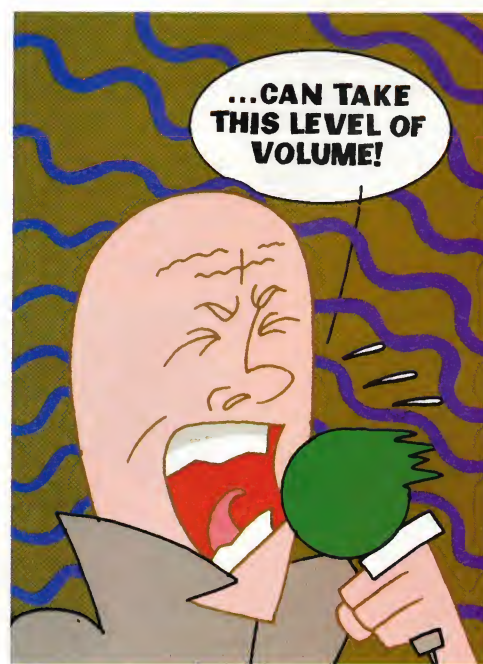
EVER HEARD ON EARTH EVER!!

FUNKATRON
FUNK WILL STOP
YOUR NOISE...

MAKE YOU LISTEN
UP TO THE FUNKA-
TRON BOYS...



WELL,
THE MUSIC
FROM THE
SHIP SOUNDS
GREAT! BUT
IT'S SO LOUD
I WONDER IF
THE AVER-
AGE TELEVI-
SION --



...CAN TAKE
THIS LEVEL OF
VOLUME!

Yeah, that's made them quiet as completely quiet things.



Right on and even further! A chance for me to speak forth at last.

Greetings, Earth people. We have landed precipitatively and unintentionally destructively as far as our vehicular situation...



...therefore, to enable us to return immediaciously to our own planetley homeys we solemnly request -

Hi, anybody got food?

Why didn't you say you were hungry right away? Nobody understood what your friend was on about.



And you estimate the Planet Funkatron is, **HOW** many miles away?

Oh, miley piles of miles. Excuse me...

Food! Good thing I managed to communicate with them or it would have been a disaster-groove bellywise...



Better let me give them the pitch about how we need to find the missing bits of the ship. I think I struck up a real understanding with these guys...

Missing things, lost or mislaid things...for a small fee I can make spells to summon dem outta da ether.



Or I, da Wiseman, can just tell you where dey are. For a fee.

Fee? I don't understand.

Here's a planet where you pays your money to take your choice or you don't get no choice. But I could put you on a easy credit scheme...

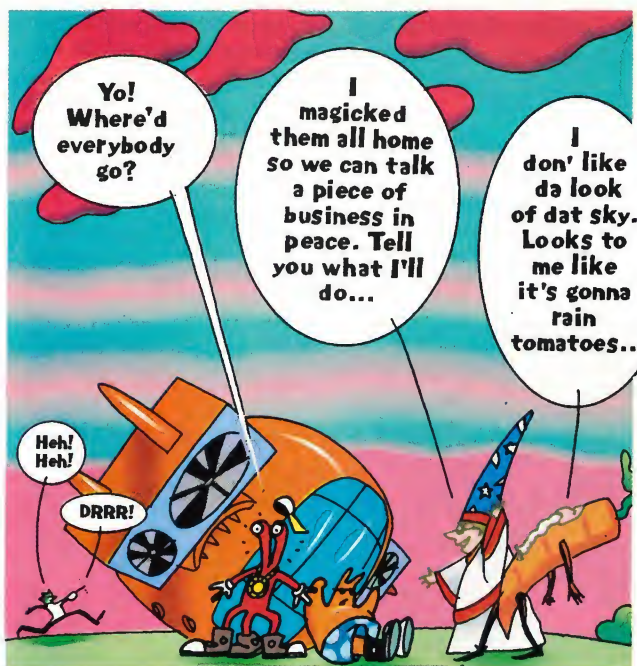


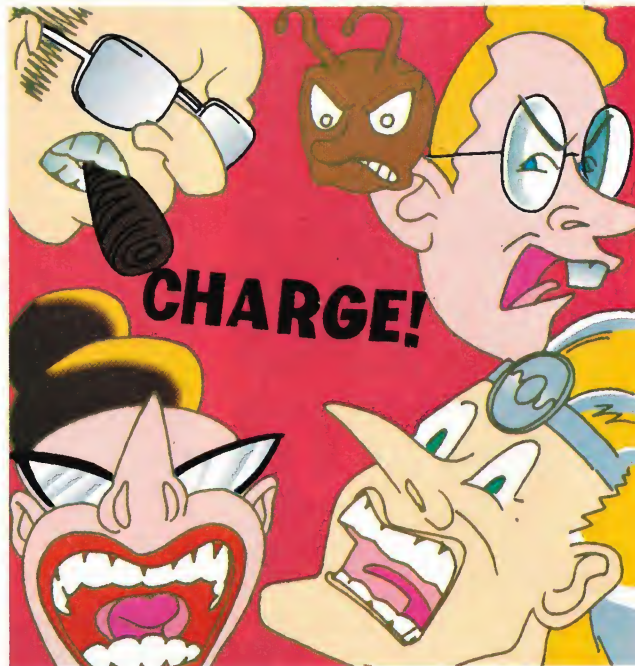
Don' listen ta him, I'm da one wid da carrot suit, I do da explaining part. Carrot suit means smart, see? Anyways, here's the deal...

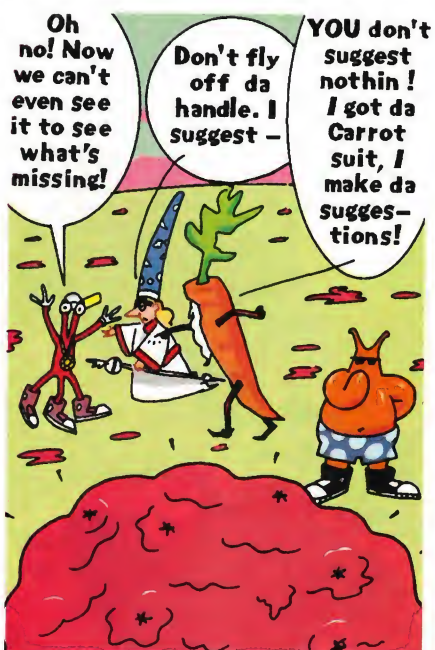
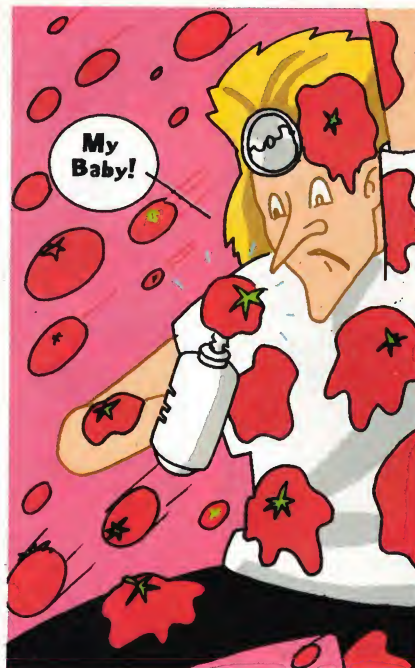




Almost home? Well, Judy Garland was wrong! Don't follow the Yellow Brick Road; take a look around the top of the map and the bottom right hand corner ...







But can even Earl eat that much? We suggest you find out next time. See ya then, Funkoids!



MAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAX

0891 600240

FIVE SUPER EMPIRE STRIKES BACK GAMES TO BE WON

-

COMPETITION

SYSTEM breakdown

CASTLE VANIA

GAMEPLAY

60%

Platform action of the old hat variety.

GRAPHICS

70%

A pale shadow of the SNES visuals.

SOUND

75%

Unremarkable effects and soundtrack.

ADDICTIVENESS

70%

Not likely to keep your attention unless your motto is "the old ones are still the best".

MAX
overall

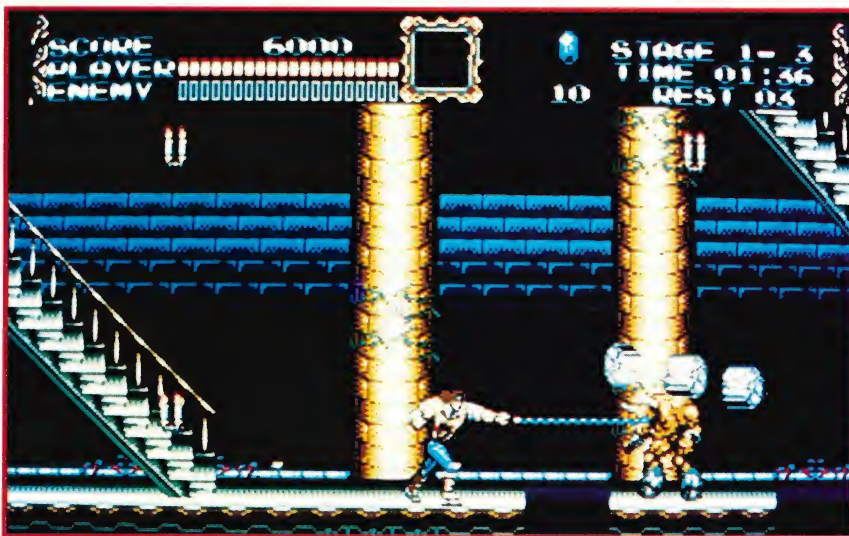
72%

DRAC Attack

Armed with a clove of garlic, a cross-shaped pendant and a frilly white shirt, **Paul Lakin** attempts to take on Count Dracula in the first **Mega Drive** **CASTLEVANIA** game.

We've been living a lie. All these years we've been happily arguing about whether the First World War was started by German expansionism or the inflexible nature of the European treaty system, when all along the war was caused by vampire Elizabeth Bartley attempting to resurrect her uncle, the loveable Count Dracula. So now you know, slap that on you GCSE paper and see where it gets you.

Anyone who owns a **SNES** or **Gameboy** will be familiar with the doings of the Belmont family



GRUESOME TWSOME

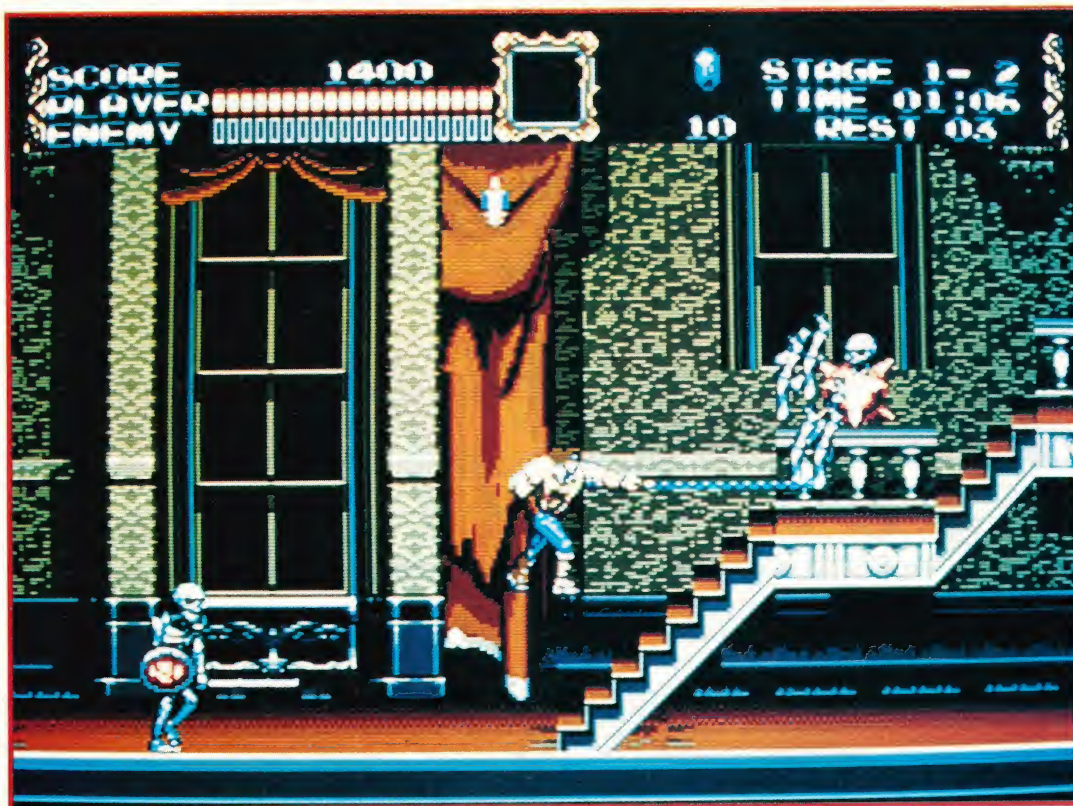
At the start of **Castlevania** you get to choose between two possible heroes. They're each given a vague biography; the unfortunately named John Morris is an American and a direct descendent of Quincey Morris, who was involved in bumping off the original Count D. (ie the one with the hat and the rifle in the film). Eric Lecarde is of Spanish descent, hasn't appeared in any films, but has had an attitude problem towards the undead ever since Elizabeth Bartley turned his fiancée into a vampire. Of course this is of little importance to the gameplay. All you really need to know is that Morris, in the way of **Castlevania** heroes everywhere, is armed with a whip, while Lecarde carries a spear and a volume of Lorca's poetry (in a feeble attempt to convince everyone that Eric Lecarde is a genuine Spanish name.)

Both heroes are able to use their weapons for more than just fighting. Like all his forebears, Morris is a dab hand at swinging from the ceiling by using his whip (or doing an Indy as it's called in superhero circles) — bound to

and how their eternal quest to put the boot into anything with pointy teeth has led them into a whole series of platform adventures. They're endlessly breaking into haunted houses, ruined mansions and the like. It's surprising they never turn up on **Crimewatch**.

It's perhaps even more surprising that it has

taken this long for the **Castlevania** series to find its way onto the **Mega Drive**. On the **Gameboy**, and particularly the **SNES**, they're outstanding examples of platform games and reached episode four over a year ago. Now they've finally arrived on the **Mega Drive** and I'm afraid, unlike vampires, the game's beginning to show its age.



LEVEL PLAYING FIELDS

The locations that our heroes have to battle through are relatively varied, a sort of European tour which takes you through Versailles and Pisa. There is also no shortage of villains or variety of ghouls. What there is a shortage of is anything new. Not only have platform games been around for a long time but **Castlevania** itself is beginning to get a bit long in the tooth. So what we have is a competent but somewhat uninspired addition to a familiar genre (thank you, Professor).

What is a slightly more serious problem is that technically it's

considerably less impressive than the *SNES* versions that were around a couple of years ago. Obviously this is in part a hardware problem, but it certainly doesn't do the *Mega Drive* any favours. The music and sound effects are rather thin and weedy while the graphics lack the solid in your face power of their *SNES* incarnation.

CASTLES IN THE AIR

Castlevania is by no means a bad game. It's pretty playable and reasonably addictive (although not as demanding as it might be). There's enough variety between the levels to keep you going; there's even the odd secret room to keep you guessing, while Lecarde and Morris both have their own special levels. However, it really doesn't have anything terribly new either in terms of technology or gameplay. If I was dithering around trying to come up with a snappy conclusion (which, spookily, is exactly what I am doing) I'd say it's a good platform game but a disappointing **Castlevania** game.



win friends and influence people. Lecarde's rival trick is to use his spear as a sort of primitive pogo stick, which is neat provided you don't get the spear the wrong way round.

WHIP CRACK AWAY

Having chosen between the two heroes, you launch yourself into Dracula's castle, the first of the six levels that lead to Dracula's new fortress in Whitby, England. Progressing through the levels is basically a matter of fighting an endless line of demons, collecting bonus points and weapons by destroying candles. There's also the occasional architectural problem to overcome, which is a poncey way of saying there's quite a lot of platform leaping to do. At one stage you also have to contend with running away from rising floods which, like much of the game, is good but unoriginal.

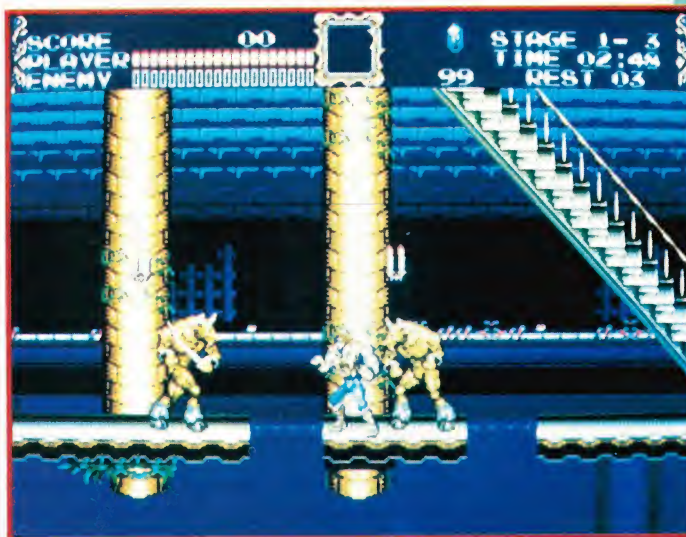
JIMMY JEWEL

It would be a pretty unusual platform game that wasn't littered with bonus items and, whatever else it is, **Castlevania** isn't unusual. The main source of bonuses come from smashing up candlesticks. John Morris has clearly never been to my house, where that sort of behaviour usu-

ally results in a clip round the ear and two nights sleeping in the garage. Items to be found include food for more energy, jewels to power up your attack item (we'll come to that in a minute), and money for those whose gameplay satisfaction is entirely based on the acquisition of points.

The attack items are special weapons which make your spear or whip seem like the glorified blow pipes they really are. There are three categories of special weapon, Blessed Water, Axe and Boomerang though they all have pretty much the same effect — death and destruction. They're perhaps better thought of as a Flame Thrower (Blessed Water), Anti Aircraft Gun (Axe) and Boomerang (er... boomerang).

To use a weapon, you first have to collect the relevant icon and then power it up by using jewels. The attack items can also be upgraded by collecting orbs. The first power-up simply increases the range and force of the weapon (and the number of jewels required to use it) while the next turns it into the Ultimate Item for the character you're using. Here we're talking serious weaponry. Lecarde has a sort of multi-direction flaming spear thing (stop me if I'm not being precise enough), while Morris is even more impressive since he's able to release a Dragon who's clearly been playing too many violent video games.



System: **Mega Drive**
Publisher: **Konami**
Price: **£49.99**
On Sale: **25 March**

MAN DRUNNERS



When *Duncan MacDonald* was seven he roller-skated down a steep hill in Croydon (the

only steep hill in Croydon) and collided at the bottom with a car. He broke his right arm, his collar bone and his left leg. Who better to review **SKITCHIN'**,

from *Electronic Arts*? (How about somebody who actually **KNOWS** how to skate? — A reader).



they've used the same basic 'game engine', meaning that if you're familiar with either of the aforementioned *Road Rash* games (and you probably are), then you'll know how well everything moves in this one... because it's the same. It's quick, it's slick, it's fluid and it's cool. But this time round you're on skates rather than a bike.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF SKITCHING

Skitching, like lots of other things, originates from America. The idea goes like this: you're wearing a pair of rollerblades (you can use regular skates but they're nowhere near as trendy) and you're stationary, at point A. Got that? You're at point A and are standing still, in your rollerblades. Nothing is happening and you currently look like a complete dickhead. Now the object is as follows: you want to get to point B, which, let's say, is four miles away — some of it uphill, some of it downhill and some of it flat.

Whatever. It's a journey, basically, and there are a few ways of going about it. Firstly you could remove your skates and walk. It's certainly an option, but it'd be a fairly tragic one to follow because of the two following reasons:

- (1) it would take about an hour and
- (2) you'd be walking, not skitching.

Righto, so here's option two... you physically skate to point B. You toil sweatily uphill, glide almost effortlessly downhill and so on. Far quicker than walking, sure, but you're still not skitching; you're just skating. No, this simply will not do, because to skitch you need to use the traffic. In fact, you need to both use it and abuse it. Skate forwards and build up some speed from your starting point, glance behind, spot an approaching car or lorry, get your timing right, and as the vehicle passes, grab hold of any 'sticky out bits'. Wahay... you're skitching.

Yup, you're now sharing the host vehicle's



GAMEPLAY

92%

Manic, exciting and smart two player split-screen action

GRAPHICS

92%

Some top animation here with a brilliant sense of perspective

SOUND

91%

Twelve grungey tunes to choose from (man)

ADDICTIVENESS

92%

More moreish than kneecapping Torvill and Dean

MAX overall

92%



SKITCHIN''s Graffiti-style graphics lead us to wonder if the designers have been practicing their calligraphy on tube trains at New Cross.



petrol but not paying for any of it. And it gets better. If the vehicle you're attached to slows down for any reason, and you feel you could do better elsewhere (a sports car within grasp, for example, or a massive 'purely under your own steam' downhill stretch) then you can simply slingshot off and do your thang. So there you go. Skitching is both a sport and a science: you not only need the basic skating skills, but also the knowledge of which vehicles to grab hold of, when to give them up as a bad job, which vehicles to swap them for and when it's time to go it alone. And there's more.



tioned brilliantly for every encounter, be it with a car, a truck, a motorbike or even another skitcher who's planning to whop you one with his club. However, don't forget that as well as all the stuff going on behind you, there's an equal amount of stuff going on in front. What you have to learn to do is look at both views at the same time. And that's fun too.

THE WHOLE NINE YARDS...



Above: Shop till you drop when you've won enough cash prizes.

Right: Like your driving instructor always said — use your rear view mirror.

Below: Another example of the games stonking graphics.



Like **Road Rash** before it, **Skitchin'** is a perfectly rounded game: all the individual elements intertwine leaving you with something actually greater than the sum of its parts — and let's face it, what with the skitching, the fighting, the stuntwork and the financial juggling in the shop sections, there's certainly no shortage of parts. The two player split-



SKITCHING VERSUS SKITCHIN'

So let's summarise. Skitching happens. It's real. It's even been happening in *this* country for a few years — I've been on buses in London and have seen talented skitchers coming from way behind, catch up, successfully negotiate the extremely busy four lane mega-roundabout at Marble Arch, and zoom off at 93 mph into the distance down Oxford Street. (I've also seen less talented ones wedged underneath taxis, but that's another story.) Which brings us back to **Skitchin'**, the game.

Okay, so take everything said so far and put it into a competitive environment: loads of skitchers at a 'start line' who want to get to the 'finish line'. And also loads of traffic, too, which happens to be going in the same direction (apart from the oncoming stuff, ho ho)... some cars moving quickly, some slowly, some erratically and so on. And there you have the game, in a nutshell. Grab hold, let go, watch your back, watch your front and get to the finish in first

place. In **Skitchin'**, however, there's more than just this one main aim (i.e. to finish first), because there's also the element of credibility. You've got to be cool. To this end there are aerial stunts to perform — they're not compulsory, admittedly, but they're certainly advised, as successfully performed hotdogging stunts equal points, points equal prizes, prizes come in cash form and your equipment wears out and you need to update it. Get the drift? We're talking 'shop' here. And you also get cash prizes for successful fights, time spent skitching police cars, and on and on and on. There's a hell of a lot to think about and you can approach the game in your own way. So the overall formula is excellent: the skating is fun, the skitchin' is fun, the fighting is fun, the stunts are fun and the tactics are fun. So what else is fun?

REAR VIEW

At the bottom of the **Skitchin'** screen there's a fully functioning rear view mirror... and if you don't bother using it you won't get anywhere. Think about it for a pico-second. A lot of your time is spent sauntering along in the middle of the road, waiting for a free ride to turn up. In the rear view mirror you get to see exactly what's approaching, how fast it's going and which side of the road it's on. You can also see your fellow skitchers catching up, falling behind or whatever. With no rear view mirror you'd be skating along and then suddenly 'blam', you'd be knocked over, and this would happen every ten seconds. But with the mirror you can be posi-

screen mode is an added boon as you can go head to head against a chum for split screen simultaneous competition, with or without the computer controlled 'skitchers'... oh, and there's also a full tournament mode. If there's one thing that some people might criticise **Skitchin'** for, it's going to be the sheer speed when compared to the **Road Rash** games... and I don't mean the quality of the animation, because that's exactly the same. No, what I mean is that some people are going to say "Yeah, but in **Road Rash** you'd be doing about 150 mph an' that, an' here you're only doin' about 60." The thing is, though, that **Road Rash** saw you on a motorbike. Here we're on skates. The way I look at it is that the lack of adrenalin gleaned from the mind-numbing speed of **Road Rash** is more than made up for by the fact that in **Skitchin'** there's always so much going on around you, so much to look at, so much to think about and so much to do. It may not have quite the 'instant appeal' of the **Road Rash** twins, but give **Skitchin'** an hour and it'll get totally under your skin. Yup, it's an absolute cracker of a game and no mistake, and I happily admit to currently being totally addicted.



SYSTEM overload

SKITCHIN'

System: **Mega Drive**
Publisher: **Electronic Arts**
Price: **£44.99**
On Sale: **March '94**

**SYSTEM
breakdown**

**SIM
CITY
2000**

GAMEPLAY

95%

Easy to get into...

GRAPHICS

95%

Outstanding visuals with three levels of magnification...

SOUND

85%

Good spot effects...

ADDICTIVENESS

95%

...and hard to stop playing.

**MAX
overall**

93%



SIM CITY 2000 is the latest chance for PC owners to play at town planners. *Patrick McCarthy* lives in a city, and once saw a house. That's the kind of in-depth knowledge we look for in a reviewer.

The original **Sim City** was one of the most addictive games ever made. Like all original ideas, it prompted a thousand inferior imitations, but now Maxis has taken four years' worth of ideas and suggestions from people who played the original and made a new version, **Sim City 2000**.

The concept, naturally, remains the same. In



Okay, okay. So you've built your new city with bridges, skyscrapers, sports stadiums... but did you remember to publish an A-Z?



case you've never seen the original, it involves you taking over an area of land, building a town and developing it until, hopefully, it becomes the country's capital city. Starting with a certain amount of money (depending on how difficult you want to make things), in any year from

1900 onwards, you try to attract people ("sims") to your town by building residential, commercial and industrial areas, linking them with roads and public transport systems and providing entertainment and leisure pursuits. You raise funds for all this by taxation and try to keep pollution, crime and traffic congestion to a minimum so that more people will move in, increasing the revenue from your taxes, which pays for more stuff to keep them there... you get the idea. As well as the planning problems, there are disasters to contend with: fires, floods, plane crashes and even rampaging monsters will undo your good work, making you spend on repairs the money you'd set aside for a park.

Get it right and you're presented with a string of rewards. You can build yourself a man-

sion — somewhere in the middle of town if you want to win votes, or away from the rabble on a secluded hilltop if you don't give a toss about them. You might also get the chance to erect an enormous statue of yourself. But get it all wrong and the population will start by being annoyed, and end up trying to move elsewhere — unless you do a Jonestown on them, of course.

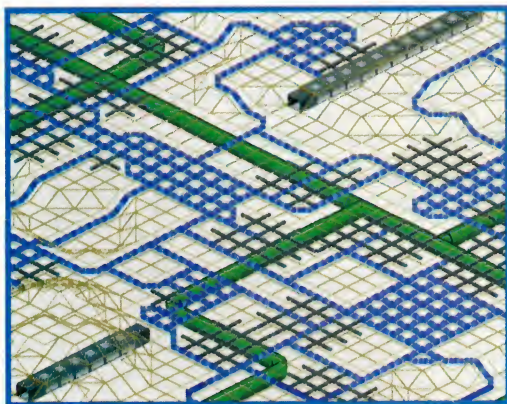
All this might sound a bit dull — you don't get to shoot rioters, you don't drive the bulldozers yourself and angry citizens don't provoke one-on-one beat 'em ups — but trust me, it's disturbingly addictive. The kind of thing that makes you forget to do things like eat, sleep and go to the toilet (which make can your room rather unattractive after a while). And now there's so much more to do.



OVERGROUND

The most obvious enhancement is the 3D view, in glorious 256-colour VGA, which you can rotate through 360 degrees (to allow you to see stuff on the other side of mountains, buildings and Russell Grant). The level of visual detail has been hugely improved: there are lights on airport runways, mini streetlamps and stop signs on roads, and even tiny hairs sprouting from citizens' noses.

Before you even think about building your city, there's a complete landscape-creating facility so you can play Capability Brown. You can spend hours raising and lowering land to create beautiful hills, valleys and plateaux, adding forests, lakes, coastline and even waterfalls where you see fit – then ruin it by building Swindon on top of it.



UNDERGROUND

There's a whole underground section, too: all buildings now have to have water supplied, as well as power. There are supply pipes, wells, storage tanks and even de-salinisation plants to fiddle with. Unfortunately there isn't an 'introduce massive levels of aluminium into the water supply' icon but, if you're inclined towards evil deeds, you can build an underground railway and underfund it, generating an unsafe and unreliable service, and drive people back into their cars, boosting lead poisoning-related deaths in the under-fives.

AIMS

Everything else is about six trillion times more complicated. There are more buildings and facilities, including prisons, marinas, schools, universities, and libraries. (Education is now high on the list of your priorities.) You can allocate High- and Low-density zones with irregularly shaped boundaries, and use eco-friendly wind and solar power, or eco-stand-offish nuclear and fusion power, to light up your citizens' lives. There are also more refined methods of keeping track of the city's budget, land value and industries, and the population's age, health and level of education. You can introduce loads of different community programmes – like Neighbourhood Watch schemes – to reduce crime, or legalised gambling to organise crime.

One new addition that comes under the heading of 'nice little touches' are the signs you can put up to name different areas of your city. They're intended for use as official naming devices – Axe Murderer's Park, and so on – but are also handy for tagging something for a later date, to remind you exactly why you put that stretch of airport runway in the middle of the children's playground.

WHAT YOU NEED

Owing to the complexity of the game and the amount of graphic detail in the visuals, you'll need a relatively high-spec machine to run Sim City 2000.

- Macs need a 256-colour monitor, a hard disk drive, a mouse, System 7.0 or above and 4MB of RAM (of which 2.5 MB must be free).
- PCs need to be a 386 or above, running DOS 3.3 or above, and have extended VGA mode (640 x 480, 256 colours), a hard disk drive, 4MB of RAM and a mouse. All the usual sound boards are supported.

WEEKS OF ENTERTAINMENT

As you'd expect, it's a game to play over the long haul. It positively encourages obsessive behaviour. At first, you might have a little short-term fun ruining people's lives by dumping nuclear power stations down in the middle of their exclusive residential areas. Blowing up bridges as busloads of commuters cross them can make interesting patterns on the screen. Clicking on the riot option provides hours of entertainment as you bask in the swimming pool of your Mayoral mansion, on a secluded hilltop outside town. Earthquakes, fires, plane crashes and gigantic rampaging monsters can also provide limitless entertainment. Floods are a downright hoot (as long as you're on that hill-top).

Eventually, however, you'll build a city that you really like. One you care about. You don't want to spoil it, you don't want to get the sack and you certainly don't want to allow your nuclear power station to wear out and explode, however humorous the effects. You start thinking seriously about how to improve the place – how to reduce pollution; how to attract people from nearby towns (there are towns all around to compete with for population and importance); and eventually, how to make your once-tiny town the capital city: that's when you become hooked. And once you are hooked, you play the thing for hours at a stretch, for weeks at a time.

It's a brilliant game that improves greatly over the original. It comes with an excellent manual to guide you through its complexities and has something for everyone (bar absolute pan-head nutcase shoot 'em up fans) to get their teeth into.

MAX ovation

SIM CITY 2000
is...
**GAME
OF THE
MONTH**

SYSTEM overload

NEW SIM CITY 2000

System:	PC
Publisher:	Maxis
Price:	£39.99
On Sale:	Feb 1994

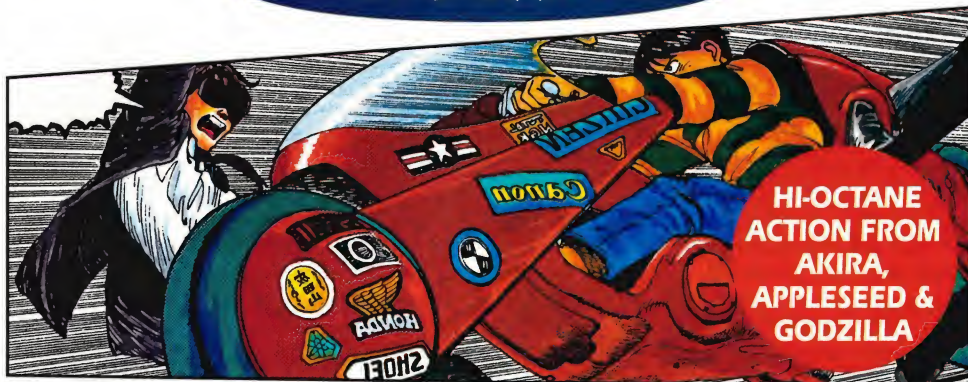
IT'S BIG!

128
MONSTROUS
PAGES



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IT'S BAD!



Akira is © 1993 MASH+ROOM Co. Ltd.

HI-OCTANE
ACTION FROM
AKIRA,
APPLESEED &
GODZILLA

IT'S BEAUTIFUL!



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COMIC STRIP
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DEPRIVED OF HIS DINNER, CHUCK'S BLOOD SUGAR LEVEL HAS PLUMMETED DANGEROUSLY LOW...

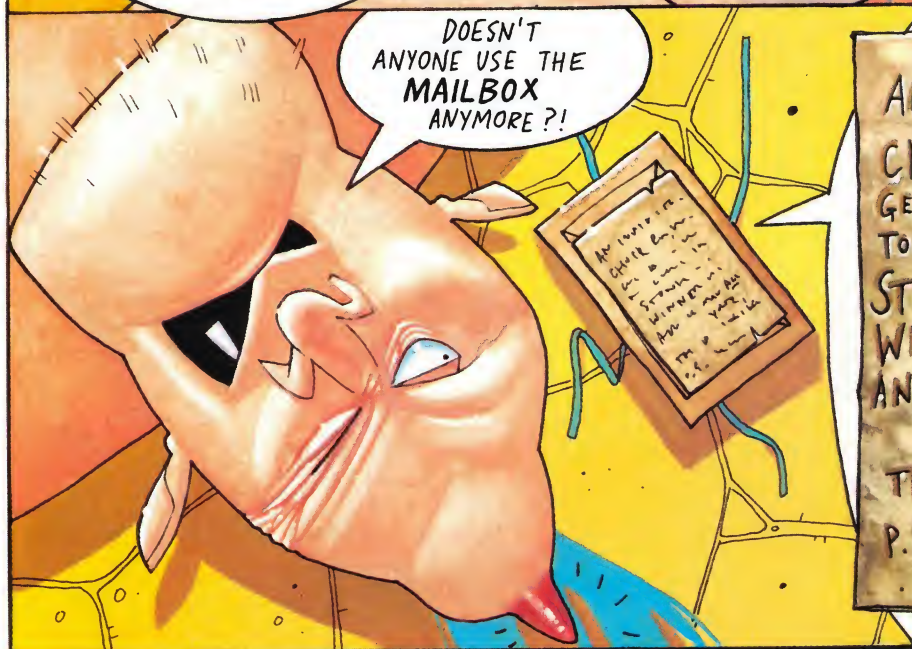
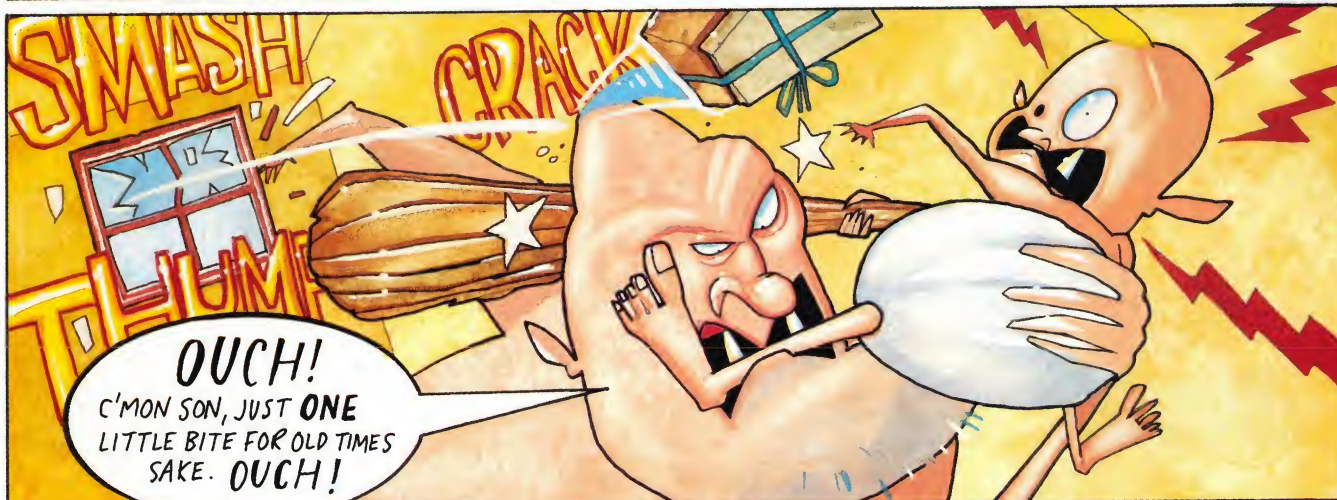


DANGEROUS FOR *OTHERS*, THAT IS.



Chuck Rock

Last issue we saw Chuck's family kidnapped by a mysterious abductor — although our neanderthal nitwit managed to rescue Chuck Jr., his wife Ophelia is still in the hands of his enemies. And to make matters worse, they've now run off with the blueprints to his Model T Fjord! How's a caveman supposed to win the Stonehinge Grand Prix with karma like that?



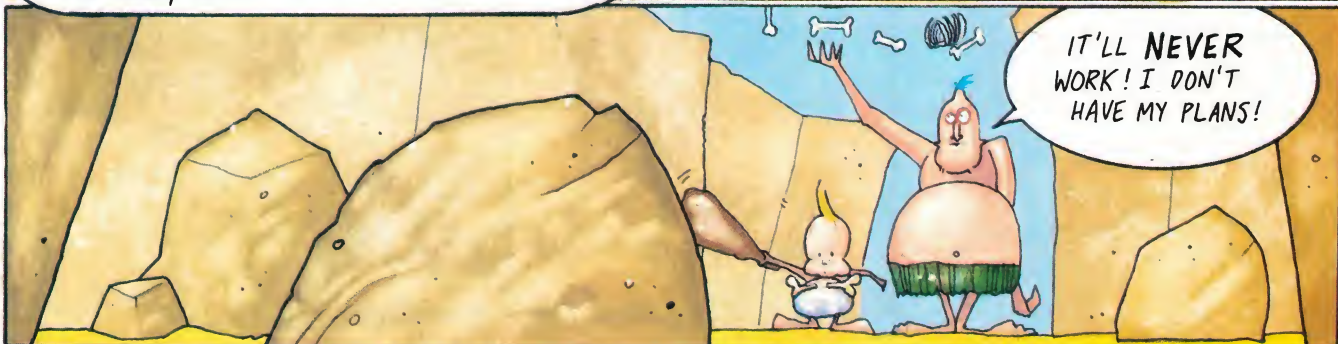
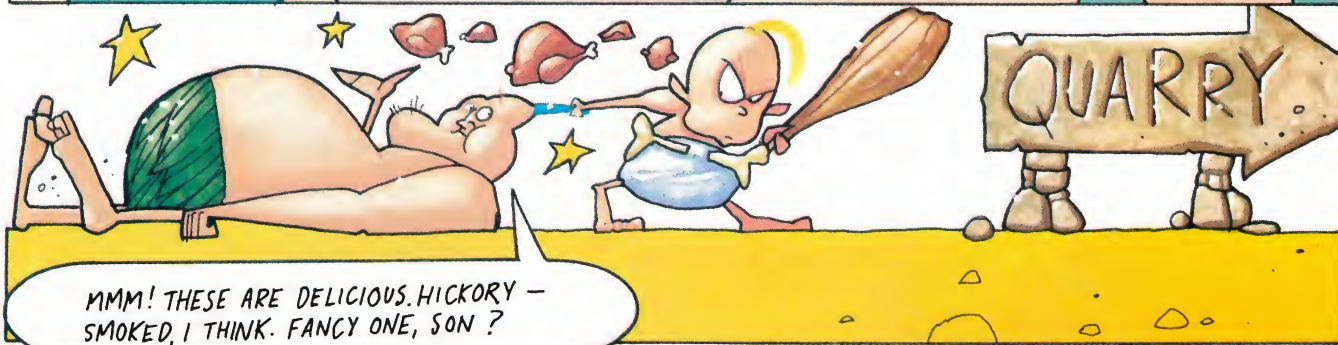
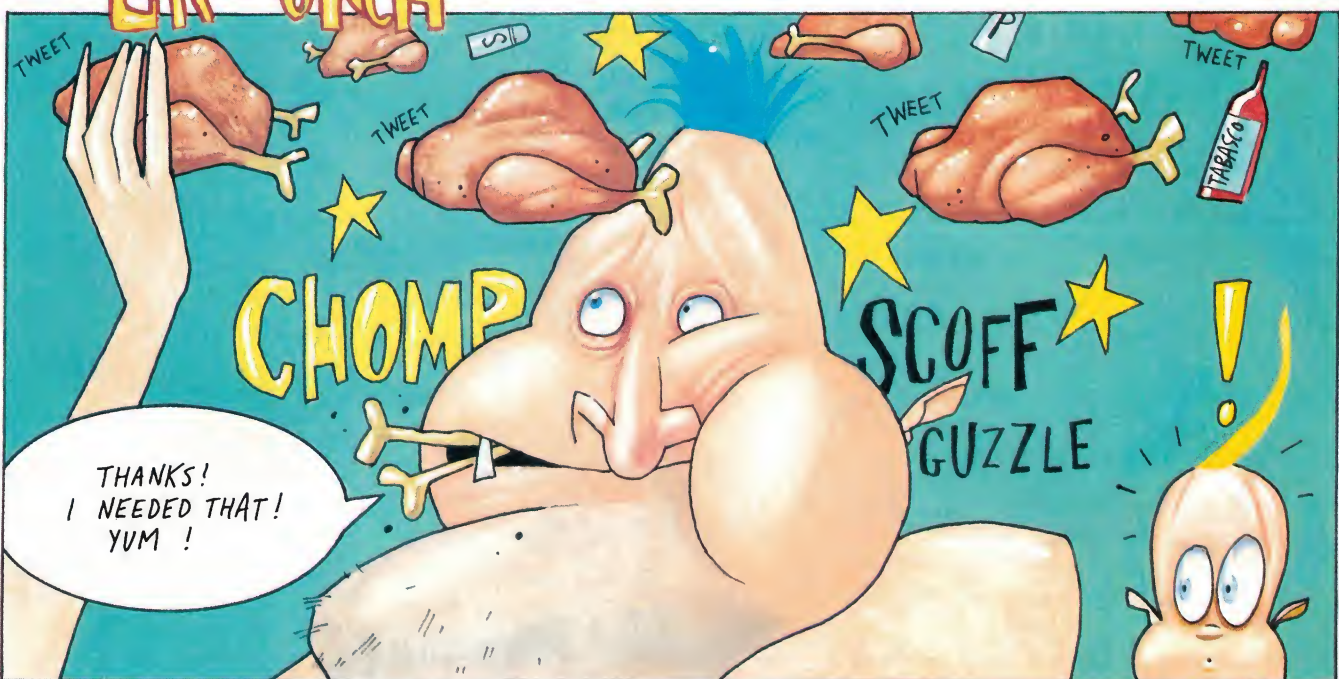
DOESN'T ANYONE USE THE MAILBOX ANYMORE?!

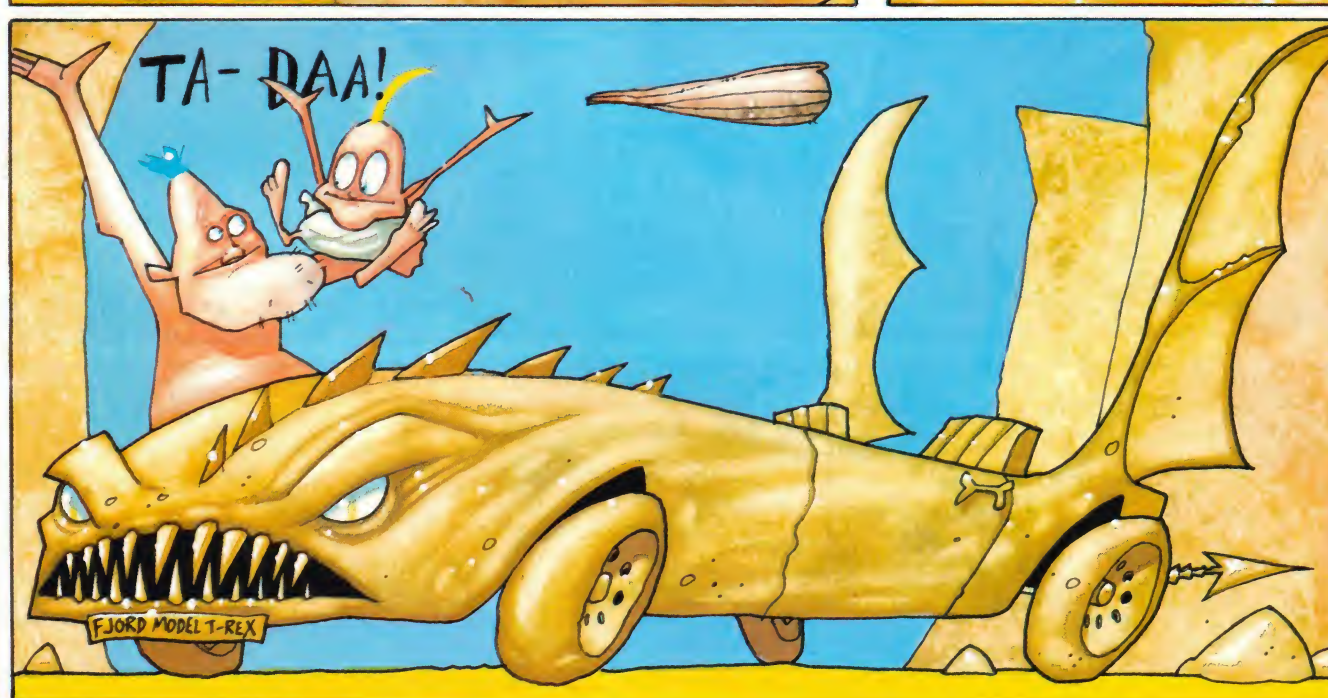
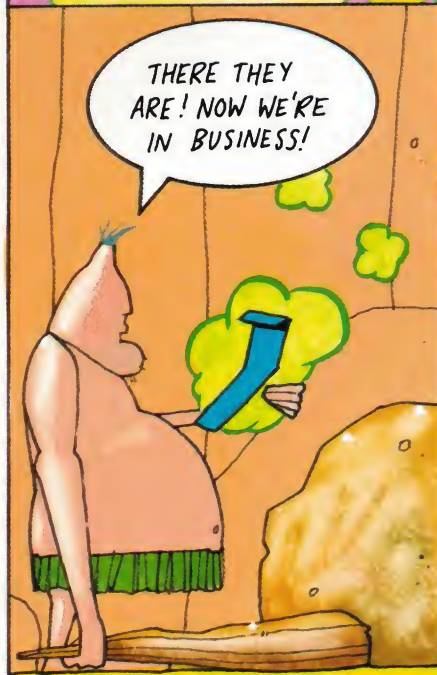
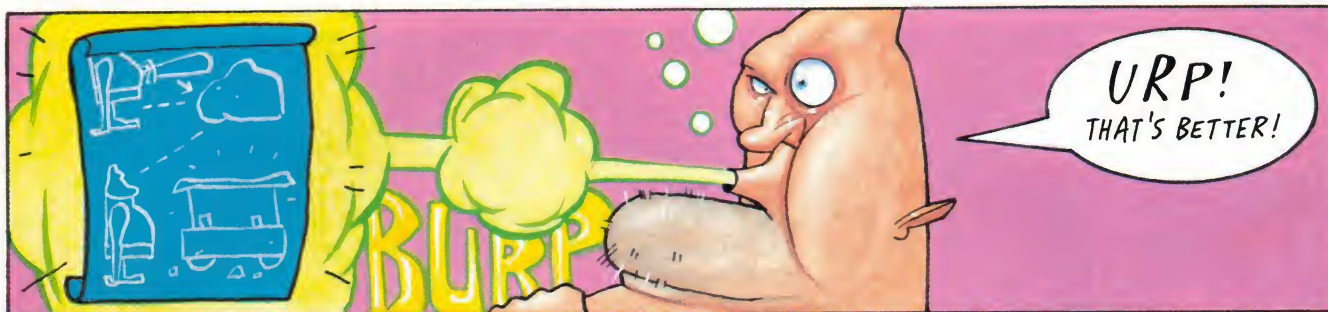
AN INVITATION TO -
CHUCK ROCK, MECHANICAL
GENIUS AND GREAT FAT GIT,
TO COMPETE IN THE INAUGURAL
STONEHINGE GRAND PRIX.
WINNER TAKES ALL.
AND WE DO MEAN ALL.
YOURS,
THE BIG ENCHILADA
P.S. OPHELIA SENDS
HER LOVE

CEFN RIDOUT
Writer
DAVID
LYTTLETON
Artist



Wanna get your hands on a level select for **CHUCK ROCK 1**? You just need to know the magic word — **ABRACADABRA (A,B,Right,A,C,A,Down,A,B,Right,A) ...**

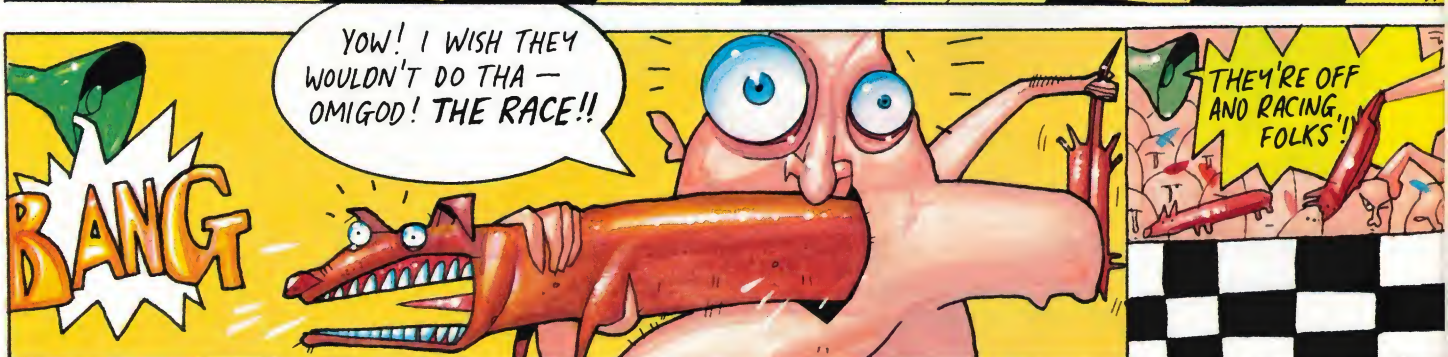




... If the guitarist stops playing and smiles, then press **A**, **B** and **C** simultaneously. If he smiles again, that means the Cheat has worked ...

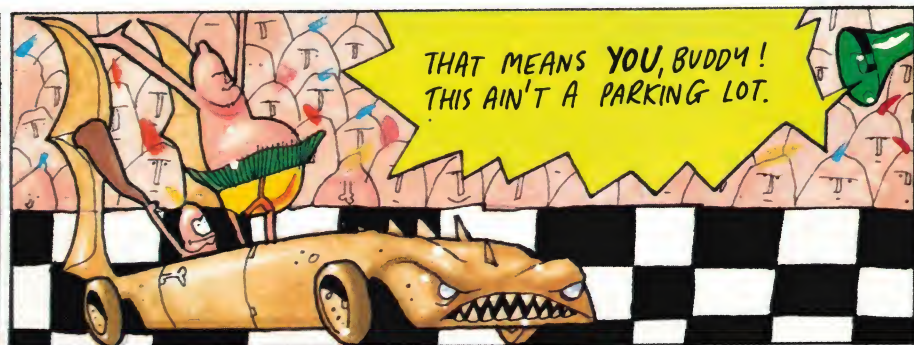
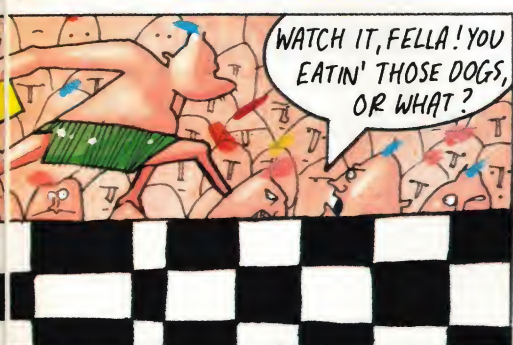


... So now you can bludgeon your way to different levels
using the combinations on the following pages ...



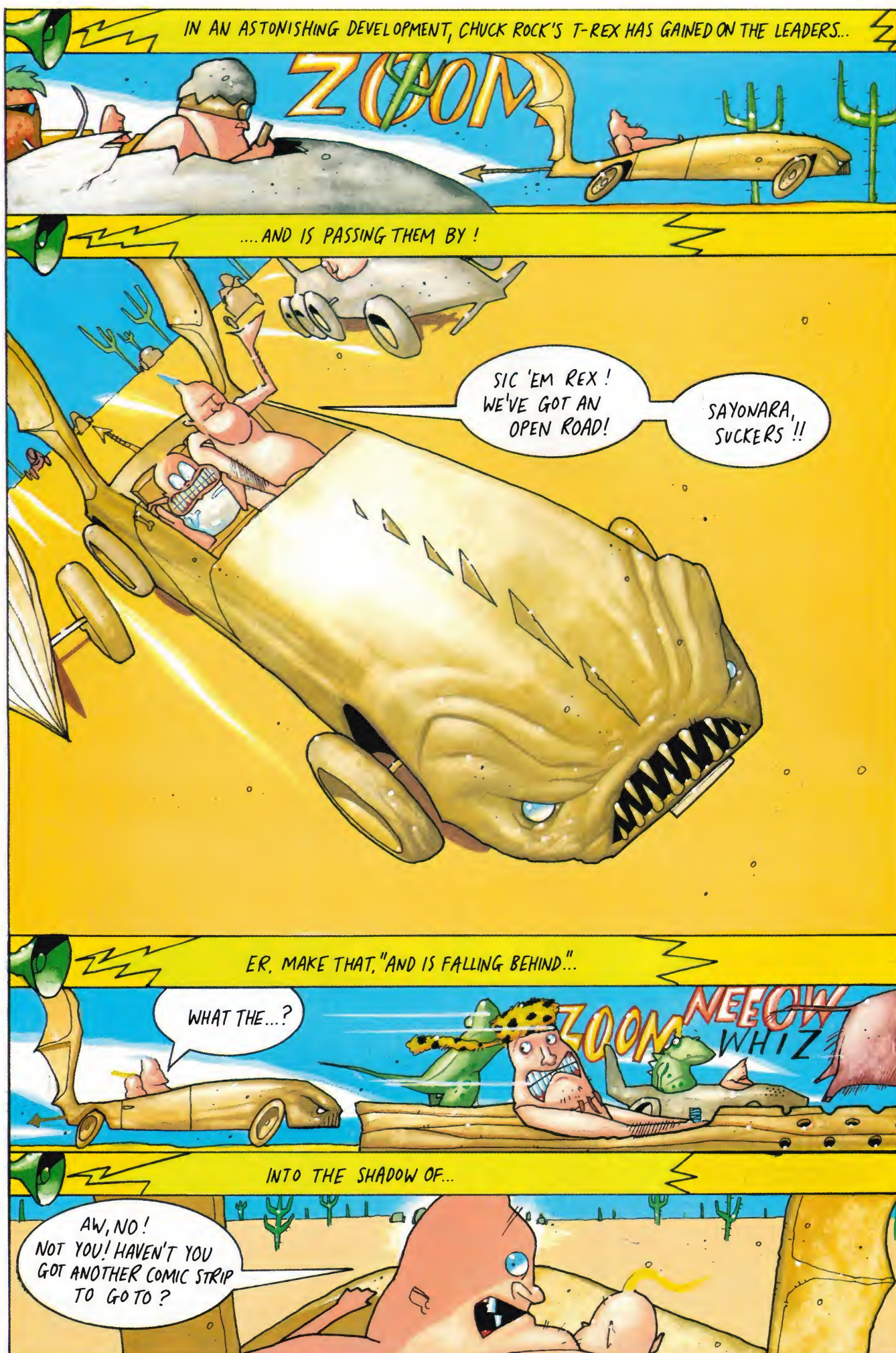


A and UP — Go forward one entire level



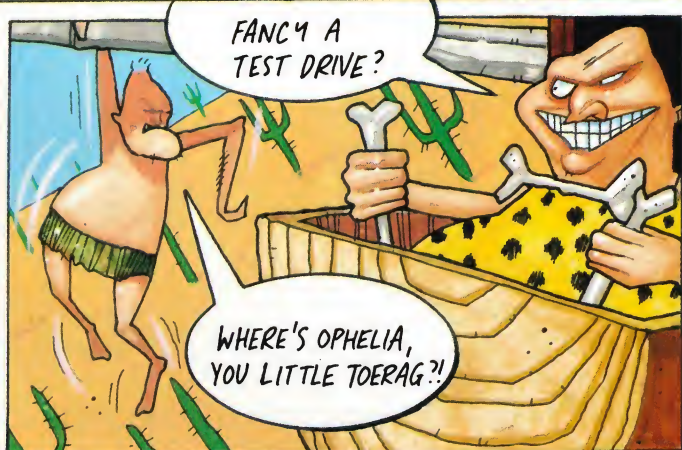
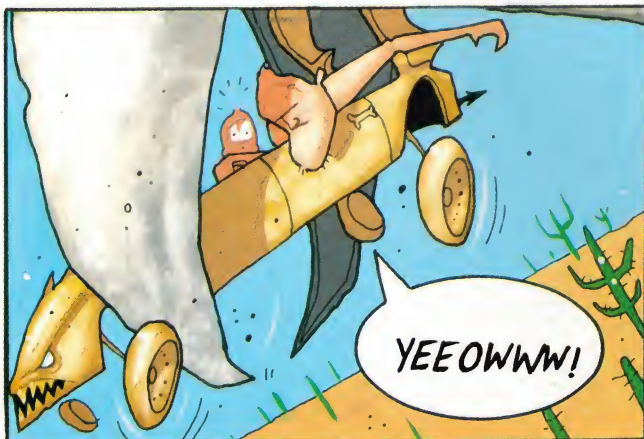


A and RIGHT — Go forward one stage



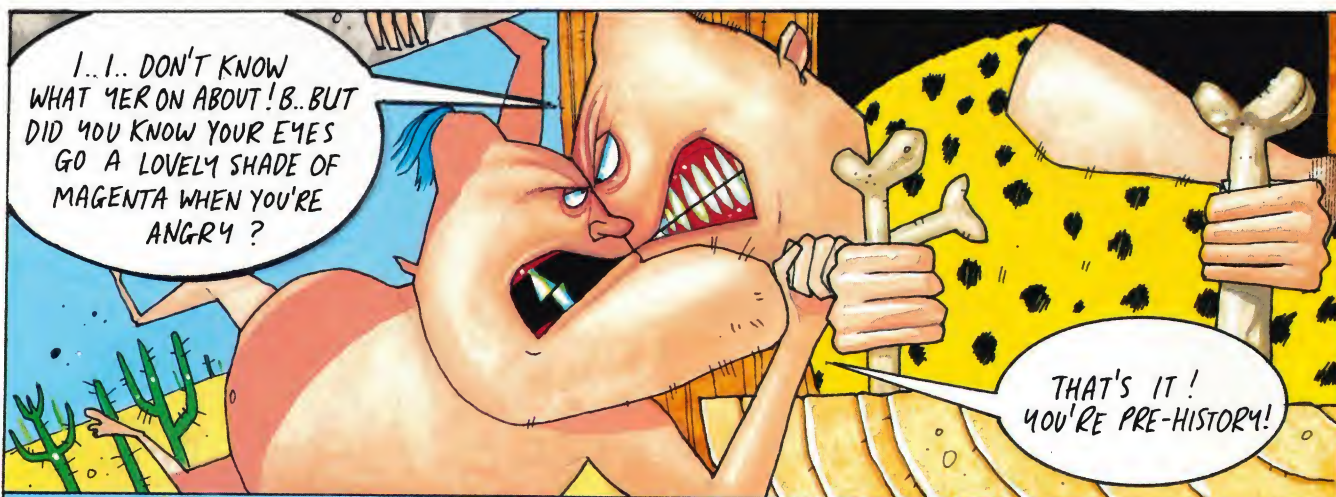


A and DOWN — Go back one entire level

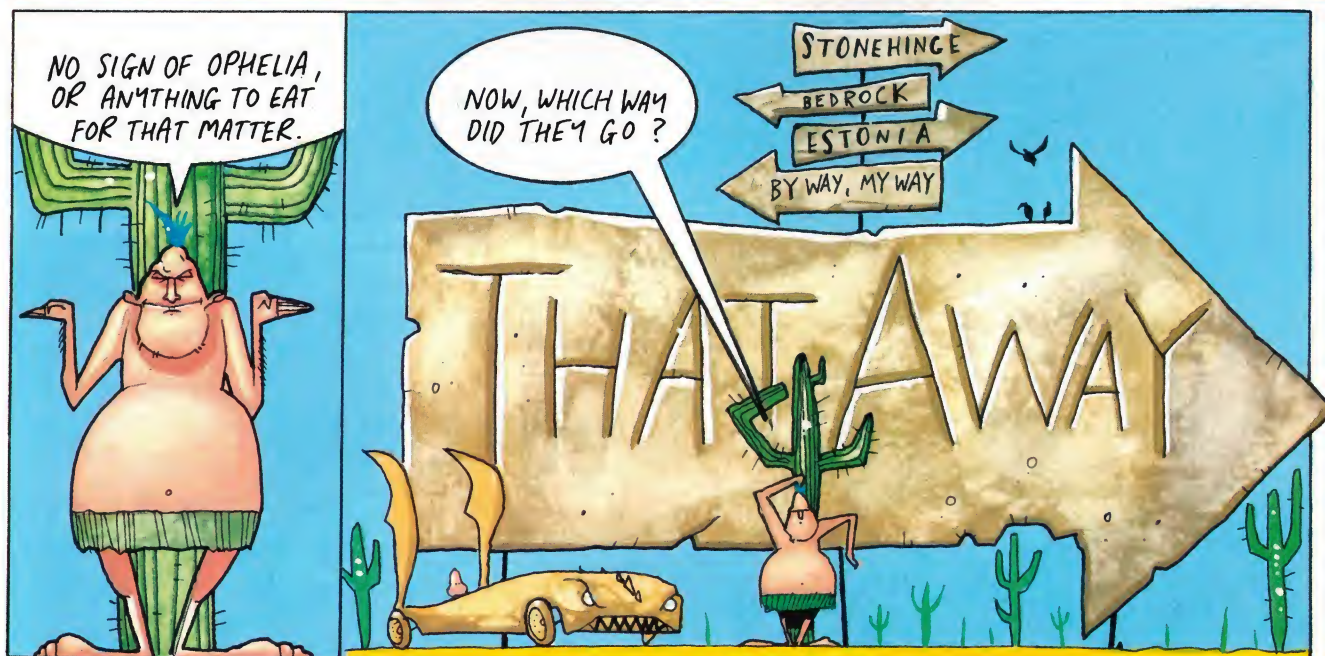




A and LEFT — Go back one stage... MORE CRO-MAGNON CHEATS NEXT ISSUE



THUMPS
BUFFS
SMASH
PUNCH



BETWEEN THE TOE JAM

MAX
interview!

Just who are the mysterious Team ToeJam? How did they come up with all those zany ideas? What or who is Lamont? And what exactly is Toe Jam!? All these questions and more sprang to mind when *Simon Grant* got to grips with *TOEJAM & EARL 2* for *Max Overload*.

Who better to direct them to than *Greg Johnson* (R) and *Mark Voorsanger* (L) – the guys that brought you *Funkatron*'s finest, *ToeJam* and *Earl*?



It's a bit weird when you call up a long phone number in Novato, California and get greeted by a chirpy American lady who says 'Hello, ToeJam'. But then, hey – this is the birth place of ToeJam and Earl; you should have expected untold weirdness and funky goings on. Greg Johnson is what is described as a 'blue sky designer' – he's the designer of the ToeJam games. Mark Voorsanger is the programming whizz that gave life to Greg's ideas. Although these guys did the majority of the work on *ToeJam 1*, they had help in *Panic On Funkatron* from graphic artist, Kirk Henderson... but more of that later. Let's find out who these fellows are exactly:

Max O: So how did you get into this industry?

Mark: I was studying Electrical Engineering and Computer Science at Cal-Berkely. Half way through my studies I was looking around at different options for what I wanted to

do when I got out of University and it seemed like the defense industry was about where everyone was putting their energy, right in the middle of the Reagan era, and I decided that was something I didn't want to do. Greg was studying Psycho-linguistics – he wanted to talk to dolphins! (laughs manically)

Max O: So you guys came from a similar background – both college educated, both... how can I put it, with a penchant for environmental issues and pacifism rather than Reagan and the defense machine? You both got into games when you were in college. So how long have you been working in the industry?

Mark: Around ten years... my first game was a game called *Fathom* for the *Calicovision* (a weird American console system. Ed.). Actually, I worked on the original *Night Trap* which got so much press over there in England (laughs). That was when it wasn't a CD product but was actually sitting on a video tape. Greg got very into games at college, and found that he was fascinated with the whole prospect, and then he met some people to work on the *Starflight* concept and he designed that.

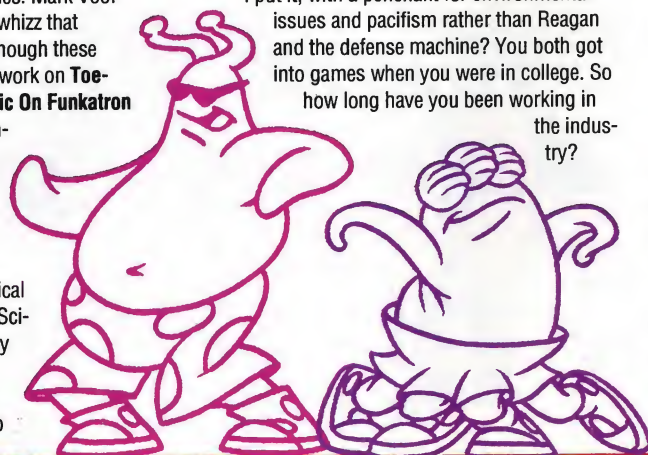
THE ROAD TO FUNKATRON

Max O: So how long have you been working together?

Greg: Well we started the *ToeJam* project together in 1989.

Max O: And how did you meet?

Greg: We had a mutual friend named Matt Zarconi, a com-



TOEJAM & EARL

puter artist that works at *Electronic Arts*. We met several times, then we were on a hike on a mountain nearby one day and I mentioned to Mark this idea for ToeJam and Earl and he seemed quite interested.

Max O: Where did the idea of ToeJam & Earl actually come from?

Greg: I don't really know where it came from... I think it was just a reaction to the pressure of the big project I was working on before, so this was really a desire to have some fun.

Mark: Greg had just come off *Starflight 2*, and that was a pretty epic game. I think it took them over two years to get it done, and he was taking vacation on Hawaii, sitting on the beach, relaxing. He wanted to do something really out there, and he came up with this idea for these two alien characters.

Greg: I guess that's where most of the best ideas come from — a relaxed mind. Which is why so many of my ideas seem to happen in the shower. It's the most productive place... you know, if I could, I'd put one in the office here.

Mark: Greg actually came up with the names ToeJam and Earl just because it sounded good and he really didn't know what ToeJam meant!

Max O: Er... why what does it mean?

Mark: Well, ToeJam is like stuff that collects on your toes!

Max O: Ah... well, obvious when you think about it, really. Also quite revolting.

LOVING THE ALIENS

Max O: When you started writing ToeJam, the majority of video game characters seemed to be sort of stereotypical well-to-do white kids. ToeJam and Earl seemed to break that mould — they were much more street credible — was that deliberate?

Mark: Well, Greg was lamenting the fact that all the major characters in the video game world were male and white, so he wanted to do something that at least appealed and was based on more black sensibilities and black music, while not

alienating white people. So he went with aliens, but in his mind these characters were always black teenagers — real hip.

Greg: I don't know that I'm the best representative of modern American black culture but at least I have the motivation and part of my roots extend that way. I don't think either

Mark or I want to be preaching to anybody. The game was really there just to have fun, but if they have fun in a kind of different voice or different spirit then that's good.

Max O: The first ToeJam game seemed very different when it first appeared.

The graphical style, the viewpoint and the two player simultaneous split-screen mode were fairly revolutionary in their day. Then, having set this precedent for originality, suddenly here's ToeJam 2 and it's presented much more in the mould of a traditional view-from-the-side platform game. How did that come about?

Mark: We were very concerned about losing our previous audience. Greg went through all sorts of existential woes when he was considering doing a platform game, but he did

everything he could possibly think of to make things different whenever he could, and still maintain some of the same vocabulary of the platform game that kids would recognise.

TWO'S COMPANY

We did have a bit of a false start on the second project, because we were going to do ToeJam & Earl 2 based on the first engine. But we have a good friend called Matt Zarconi who was working with us at that time, and he was working on an intro where we did real large characters and when we saw those, we just said 'Boy, that would be really great if we could do a game with characters that large'.

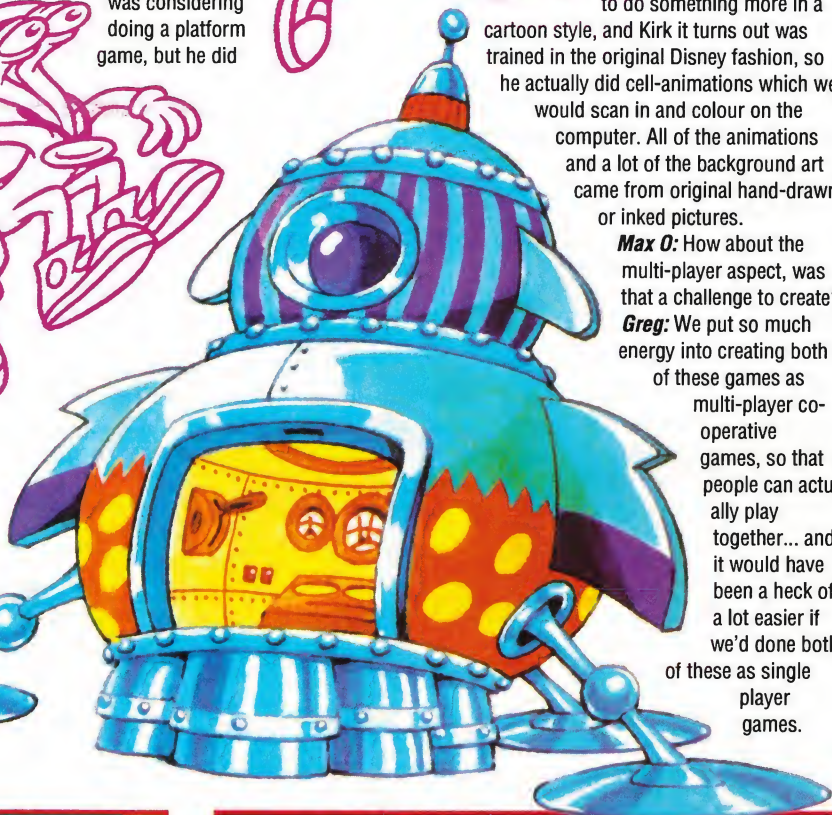
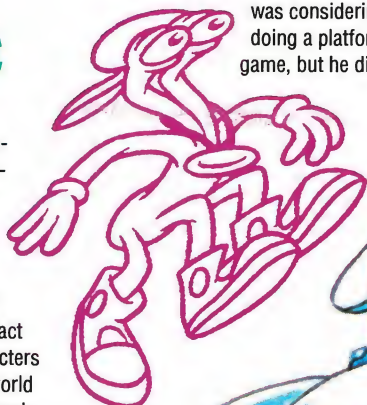
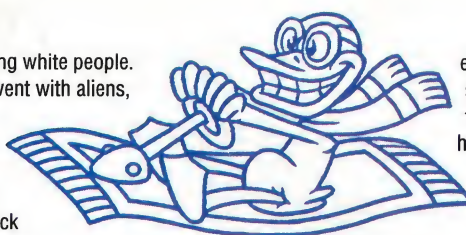
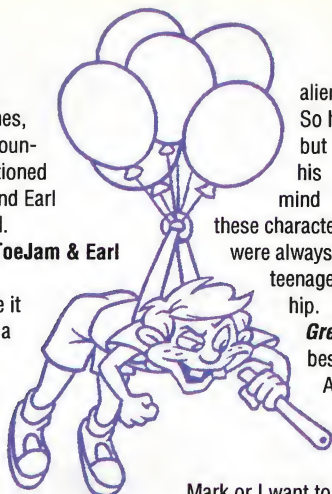
So we revamped everything and had to go with the side scrolling because we couldn't handle the animation with those big characters.

Mark: Kirk Henderson was the one to do a lot of the graphics in the game. Greg would do some original sketches or animations, but for the most part Kirk really brought Funkatron to life.

Greg did almost all the art in the first one, then we decided we wanted to do something more in a cartoon style, and Kirk it turns out was trained in the original Disney fashion, so he actually did cell-animations which we would scan in and colour on the computer. All of the animations and a lot of the background art came from original hand-drawn or inked pictures.

Max O: How about the multi-player aspect, was that a challenge to create?

Greg: We put so much energy into creating both of these games as multi-player co-operative games, so that people can actually play together... and it would have been a heck of a lot easier if we'd done both of these as single player games.



"We wanted to build a living, interactive world."



"In the video games world, all the major characters were male and white."

There's the technical questions, and also balancing the play for two player versus one player was a bit of a headache... but we feel strongly about that.

Max O: And it looks like *Sega* have got more split screen multi-gameplay right now, with *Sonic 3*...

Greg: Yeah, I'm really happy to see that becoming a trend. I don't know whether or not it's fair to take credit for that with *ToeJam*, but I hope that the trend continues because it's so much more fun when you're playing with somebody.

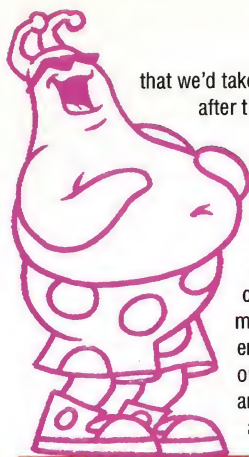
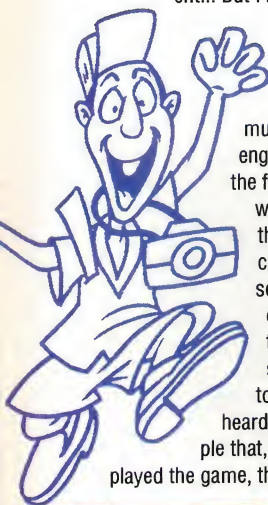
WHOOOPS UPSIDE YOUR HEAD

Max O: How did you reconcile yourselves to the second game looking more like a conventional platform game? Obviously when the first game appeared, it was so different – with the top-down, three quarter perspective etc.

Greg: Yeah, well it was a difficult decision at first... we actually quite liked the look of the first one. Got a lot of positive feedback on it from people who were looking for something different... But I'm very happy with the

decision we made, primarily because it let us develop the big characters that we could do so

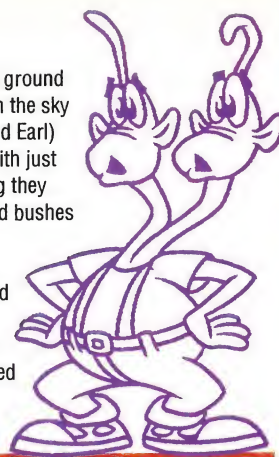
much more with. With the engine we had for the first game, we were stuck with the small characters so we could get the split screen and the top-down view. We've heard from a lot of people that, when they first played the game, they were disappointed



that we'd taken that route, but after they'd played it for a little while, they saw that it was very different from so many of other games.

Max O: Now that the characters are so much bigger, it enables you to bring out more of ToeJam and Earl's characters and their home

tures ran on the ground and birds flew in the sky and (ToeJam and Earl) could interact with just about everything they saw — trees and bushes and manholes; where they had friends who lived there and who they could talk to, who wandered past or lived in their houses.



planet.

Greg: I think what distinguishes this game most strongly from other side-scrolling platform games is the idea that we started where we wanted to: building a living interactive world where crea-

We tried to make it a friendly, animated place that seemed like their home. So many other of those side-scrolling games seemed to me to be rather barren environments where you don't really do anything.

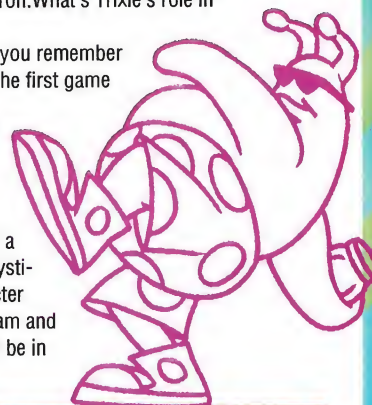
Max O: Yeah, some of those side scrollers can feel rather linear experiences.

Greg: Yeah, you just jump and shoot and jump and shoot...

THE FOLKS ON FUNKATRON

Max O: Tell us a little about the other characters on Funkatron. What's Trixie's role in ToeJam?

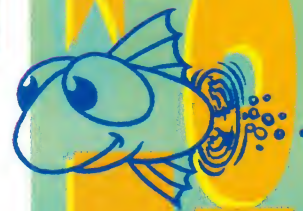
Mark: Do you remember her from the first game — down in the right hand corner? She was really a kind of mystical character that ToeJam and Earl could be in



Every level in *Panic on Funkatron* has gloriously funky background images.



MAX interview!



"We put so much energy into creating these games as multi-player co-operative games."

MAX interview!

love with. We just had to bring her back.

Max O: Is she a potential romantic interest or always destined to be an obscure object of desire?

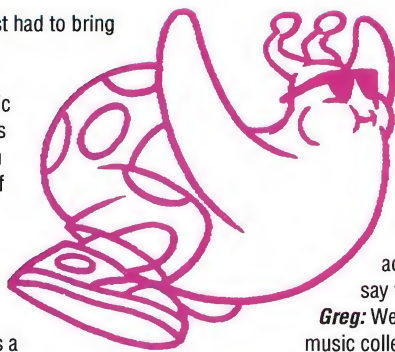
Mark: I think that was probably just how we saw her.

Definitely there is a little bit of twinkle in Earl's or ToeJam's eyes with Luanda, who you see throughout the game, but I think Trixie is just this unobtainable beauty.

Max O: How about Lamont, the Funkapotamus?

Mark: It don't know exactly when he came into being. He came in a little after the original design. Mostly we wanted to show off ToeJam and Earl on their world, but as we came to the concept of 'Funk' and how earthlings were damaging the environment of Funkatron, then it seemed right to Greg that all of Funk should come from this little creature that originally we were going to build up as this amazingly powerful source of funk.

Everyone was supposed to talk of Lamont as this really large and wonderful thing - the name Funkapotamus was supposed to conjure up an image of something really large - so it would be silly and humorous that he would be this little character who was kind of surly and not even interested.



PLAY THAT FUNKY MUSIC

Max O: Obviously music plays a big part of the ToeJam games. The two central characters themselves are fans of rap music and ToeJam 2 itself also offers a choice from 12 accompanying tunes. What would you say were your musical influences?

Greg: We actually have quite an extensive music collection we listen to here in the office when we're working. A lot of rap music, obviously, and we listen to a lot of ethnic music.

Max O: ToeJam & Earl seems to be most influenced by rap...

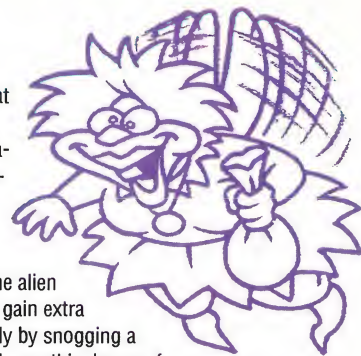
Greg: I find it the most liberating - when I feel tense, that's what we turn up the loudest: turn up the bass and dance around a bit.

Greg: We listened to Young MC a lot while we were producing the game. He was probably our favourite of the rap artists... and Heavy D - in fact

there's one tune that really influenced the theme tune to ToeJam.

Max O: Mark mentioned that you always harboured a desire to talk to dolphins.

Do you think that the underwater sequences in ToeJam 2 where the alien duo can gain extra air supply by snogging a puffa fish, are this dream of yours subliminally manifesting itself!? A video game representation of your urge to commune with aquatic life?



Greg: You know, I never made that connection (laughs). I guess I've always been interested in communication and thinking and talking to the dolphins or primates - I've actually had a secret hidden desire that if aliens ever landed on the planet I would be called up to go and talk to them.

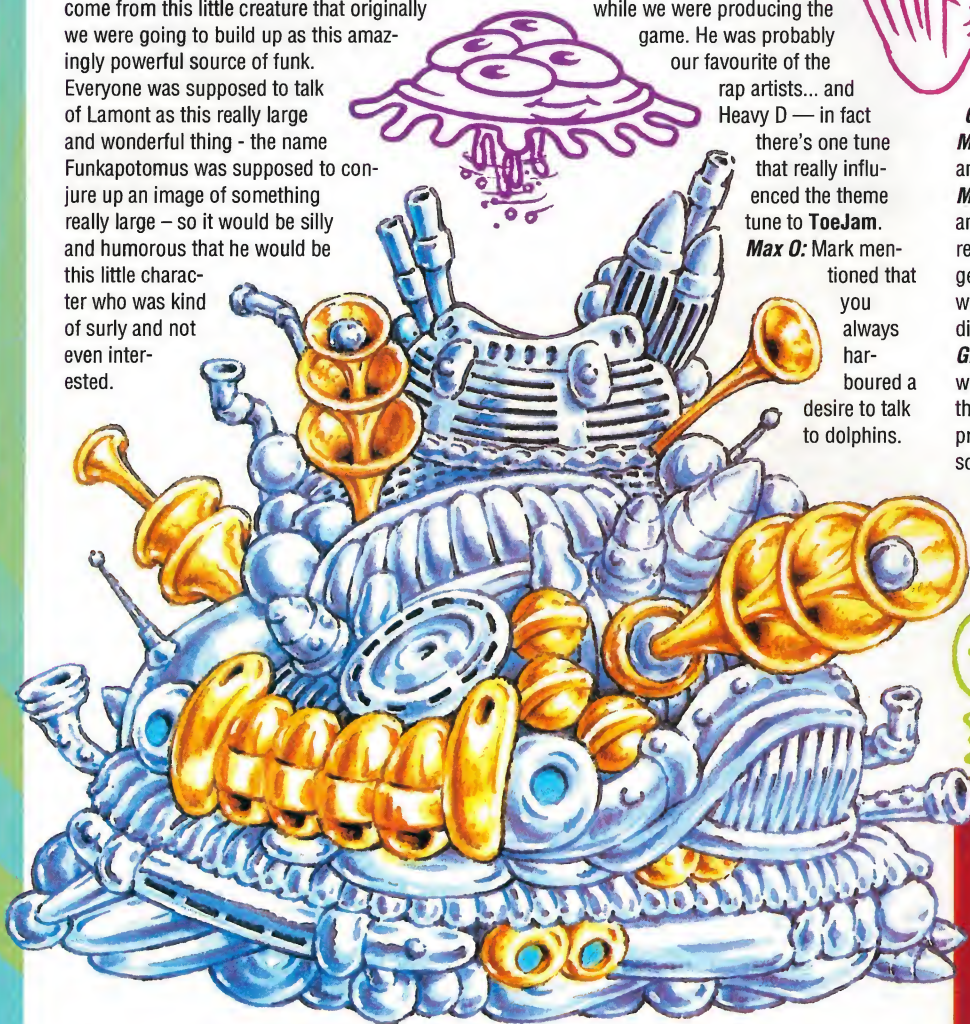
Max O: Do you think there is intelligent life out there?

Greg: I sure hope so!

Max O: So, finally, do you think there'll be another ToeJam game?

Mark: Uh, I don't think there is going to be another by me and Greg... this last one was a real push - it was everything we could do to get it out. I think it would be possible to work with some other people on it and not be as directly involved.

Greg: I don't know. I would have said 'no' a little while ago - if you'd caught me earlier, just after the second one - we were both pretty frazzled after it. But we have sort of brought it up with Sega and it does, of course, kind of depend on how well this one does.



Lamont's Throne of Funk!

So there you have it, straight from the proverbial horse's mouth. A pair of cool-thinking, quirky Californians who seem to have the right attitude about many things - including what makes a game fun. I for one will be looking forward to their next project with some excitement.



"TOEJAM AND EARL was really a desire to have some fun."



"When we feel tense, we turn up the bass and dance around a bit."

GET REAL

MAX
overview!



It's black. It's brill. It's going to be big (as in huge). It's the 3DO and it is, quite simply, the future of games-playing. Oh, a bit dubious, are we? Don't believe it, hmmm? Allow David McCandless to convince you.

We have seen the future. In a year from now, the *Mega Drive* and the *SNES* will have become insults. "Your mum's a *SNES*," you will say to someone you don't like. "You see that," you'll say, pointing to an anoraked train-spotter, "That's your *Mega Drive*, that is." The *3DO*, you see, will have pushed the current consoles into the bathroom bin (right at the bottom, with all of last week's cotton buds).

The *3DO* is a revolutionary new games system. Yeah, we know every console and its chimpanzee is called revolutionary when it first comes out. But the *3DO* is revolutionary. For a start, it's not a single machine, as in *Mega Drive* or *Jaguar* — it's a system, more like VHS. So anyone — you, your mother, your milkman — can develop a 3DO game and any manufacturer — *Panasonic*, *Sanyo*, *Yamaha* — can release a 3DO machine.

They don't need a licence. They don't need permission from some mega-corporation like Sega or Nintendo. So that means a zillion more games than is humanly possible to imagine will be appearing for the 3DO in the next few years.

Now, these zillion games will be able to use the 3DO's built-in hardware, which, frankly, make Sega and Nintendo's current machines look like something from the steam age. Millions of colours, video quality images, CD storage (650 megabytes compared to a cartridge's 8MB average), CD quality sound, animation chips which can produce *Chart Show* style graphic intros, and a fast, as in speedy, 32-bit RISC processor (*SNES* and *Mega Drive* are only 16-bit), allowing it to handle twice as much info, twice as fast.

Of course, as we all know, it's not the size of the pants but what's in them. Read on.

If you get bored of playing the games (very unlikely) the 3DO will easily double as the bottom of a pillar (for some house plants) or as a nice black footrest.

LOOKING GOOD

For once, in the history of games consoles, the *Panasonic REAL 3DO* looks good. It's black for a start. Sleek and sexy in a way the 'grey-boy' *SNES* could never be. It's sturdy and heavy, sturdier and heavier in fact than the 'balsa wood' *Mega Drive*. The joystick is black and grey, stealthily abducting the *Mega Drive*'s button layout and the *SNES*'s design. Also there's only one joystick connector, because controllers 'daisy chain'; that is, you link them together to make a rope of up to eight other players (the last one sitting on the toilet eighty eight feet away in the next room).

The 3DO's hard, black and unplasticky out-sides conceal a heart of pure techie gold. An ultra-powerful CPU (Central Processing Unit) — which can handle data 50 times faster than the Sega or Nintendo — controls a double speed CD drive (twice as fast as the *Mega-CD*) and a graphics chip that can handle 64 million pixels a second (compared to most consoles' 3 million). It also has special chips (similar to the *SNES*'s Mode 7 but better) which can take video quality images and twist, fade, blur, and warp them in all sorts of posh ways (in real time). And it has a system called CinePak which can store minutes, hours maybe, of high quality video images (for intros and posh bits).



THE GAMES

At the moment there are only 18 completed 3DO games in circulation on the American sub-continent. However, there are over 120 games 'in development', some of which you may recognise. Have a gander...



PANASONIC REAL 3DO SYSTEM

MAX overview!

3D FOOTBALL



The incomprehensible joys of NFL brought to you 3D0-mation. Follow camera views, digitized players, definable plays – all without Madden's rather plump face. Paradise.

RED BARON



A bit of a classic is Red Baron – a World War I flight sim of gargantuan proportions and gameplay. I hate to sneer, but the 3D0 version looks classier.

JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL

The 3D0 version of the legendary football game is close to completion, featuring a fully talking and gesticulating digitised Madden, loads of teams, different weather conditions and over 100 clips of NFL plays.



CRASH AND BURN

Crash 'N' Burn is the game which comes free with the *REAL* bundle. It's set in a post-apocalyptic future, a nightmare landscape where the survivors of nuclear war have nothing better to do than race around some curvy tracks in brightly coloured cars. You choose a character from six digitized 'actors'. They give you a bit of spiel, yacking on about how they are the 'best' and that they 'vill vin' (a couple of them are German), and then you're off (in their car).

The gameplay is no big deal. You and six other vehicles bullet around 30 odd courses, shooting and barging each other off the road in a sweaty effort to get in the top three. An arsenal of lasers, rockets, heat-seeking missiles and proximity mines can be bought with prize money, as can some neat nitro-injection and 'volvo bumpers' style defensive kit.

As you can see from the stills, Crash 'N' Burn's graphics are excellent. As well as super-fast moving cars and a track which goes up and down, through tunnels, side to side and upside down, you get an excellent mountainous backdrop and realistic clouds. The resulting impression of speed is phenomenal. When you go up a hill, your stomach goes up too. In certain sections, you can see the other side of the track and your opponent's cars zooming miles away in the distance. There's nary a flicker, a pause, a jerk, a halt or a glitch. The whole thing is ultra-smooth and ultra-fast. It's not unbelievably stunning, but you'd have to push the *Mega Drive* and *SNES* really hard to get them to do even a passable impression of this.



Crash 'N' Burn has an impressive intro showing our entire civilisation being erased by nuclear fire.



You can decide how long you want to stay in the pits to repair the sore bits of your car. But remember – the other cars are lapping you.



Above: Choose your character. I chose Jools Holland, who then goes on to posture and act badly in a duff Australian accent, while the car on the right rotates smoothly.

Right: As the old adage goes, "The more weapons, the merrier". But careful – the other drivers have them too.



TOTAL ECLIPSE

Total Eclipse is a standard shoot 'em up. You got your aliens (some homing kamikaze fighters, some deadly flying saucers and some stationary gun turrets). You've got your ground targets (gun turrets, rocket silos and small missile bases). And you've got your power-ups, powering up your shields, adding homing missiles, bombs, and so forth. So far, so average. But nothing in the term 'shoot 'em up' can prepare you for the graphics. They are awesome.



Above: Hey! The Star Wars trench run didn't have shrinking walls. Or huge descending blades. Or tight corners. With spikes.

Right: Roll and pitch to navigate the corridors of death.



Steer around the dangerous looming cliffs and crevasses. Avoid the walls – they hurt.



Above: Swing side to side, duck, pitch, rotate, and spin – anything... ANYTHING to avoid the deadly trench walls.

Left: Swing side to side, duck, pitch, rotate - aarghhhhh!

Take StarWing on the SNES. You've all seen it. Some of you may even have dribbled slightly. Nice game. Lah-de-dah. Take those kind of graphics, you know – boxes and polygons in all different colours making up rather 'lego' spaceships and scenery. Put them on the 3DO and make them look video quality. Make the walls metallic with pock-marks and bumps and dips. Make mountains covered with grass, contoured with valleys and basins, and make them loom out of the darkness. Make the sea actually wave and thrash about beneath you. Add an underground corridor section that makes Star Wars' trench run look like it was made on Blue Peter. Give this corridor so many little corridors, tight squeezes and horrible little junctions that you're actually crying, as in bawling your eyes out, when you reach the end. And while you're at it, add an intro sequence which equals the quality of the beginning of Star Trek: Next Gen and a soundtrack with real heavy rock guitar and drums. Get all this together and you're talking Total Eclipse.

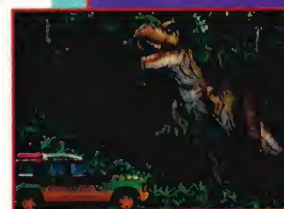


Survive and encounter the scary be-lavared later level.

MAX

overview!

JURASSIC PARK INTERACTIVE



Er, wow. This is looking good (using, as it does, the graphics from the film).

THEME PARK



The next wonder-game from Bullfrog (Populous, Syndicate, PowerMonger) will be getting the 3DO treatment sometime around June.

THE HORDE



The Horde is a 3D isometric chop 'em up with you taking on lots of comedy monsters and slicing them into meatballs.

MAX overview!

MUSIC CDS

As well as playing the fantabulous games on offer, the 3DO will also double as a neat and rather unique looking music CD player. It won't just play them. It will synchronise some rather ravey and trippy colour effects which rotate and blur and force you to say 'man' in time with the music. But what of quality? "It's an average audio CD player," says Alan Sircom of Hi-Fi Choice magazine. "About as good as a portable CD player. Sounds too congested, but you don't get pretty light effects with a CD." He should know.

ORION OFF ROAD



It's *Total Eclipse* with a car, basically. Ride the inclines and buggy over dodgy volcanic terrain in this fast (very fast) moving racer.

ROAD RASH

You remember this one. Urban motorbike racing with truncheons and beating up policemen. It was smart on the *SNES*, mega on the *Mega Drive* and now it's blinking amazing on the 3DO. The intro sequence alone is like a mini-film, with all sorts of biking demons skidding and wheeling all over the shop, scattering dumb cops left, right and centre. It took an entire film production company three days to shoot it in San Francisco and it looks great. The game has been tarted up with all sorts of 3DO trickery – entire digitized towns, loads of frames of animation, special 'texture mapping' effects to produce realistic scenery and six 'alternative rock bands' providing the soundtrack (their videos are even included on the CD). It's looking great. Expect jaws to be dropping all over the world in June.

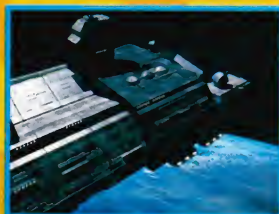


Here, the Road Rash video team (a token 'lady') size up a shot for the long-running movie intro.

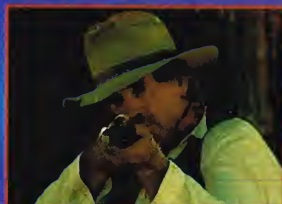
SHOCKWAVE



The Earth's under attack again and yeah, yeah, yeah... it's you who's got to save it. Using digitized satellite photography and the 3DO video effects, *Electronic Arts* has created an incredible fast moving 3D shoot 'em up. Your first mission is to repel the aliens invading Egypt. And in you go, zipping and ducking around pyramids and monuments, picking off enemy ships and tanks. Nasty, fast paced action a-bungo. It's still in its early stages but I, personally, can't wait.



MAD DOG MACREE



The famous arcade interactive cowboy film is coming on the 3DO. Expect it to be toppling from the saloon's roof sometime in winter this year.

PGA GOLF TOUR



The all new 3DO version of PGA features a fully digitised 'chap', filmic reverse angle views, and, of course, lots of middle class people saying "What ho!" and sipping sherry.

THE FUTURE OF THE FUTURE

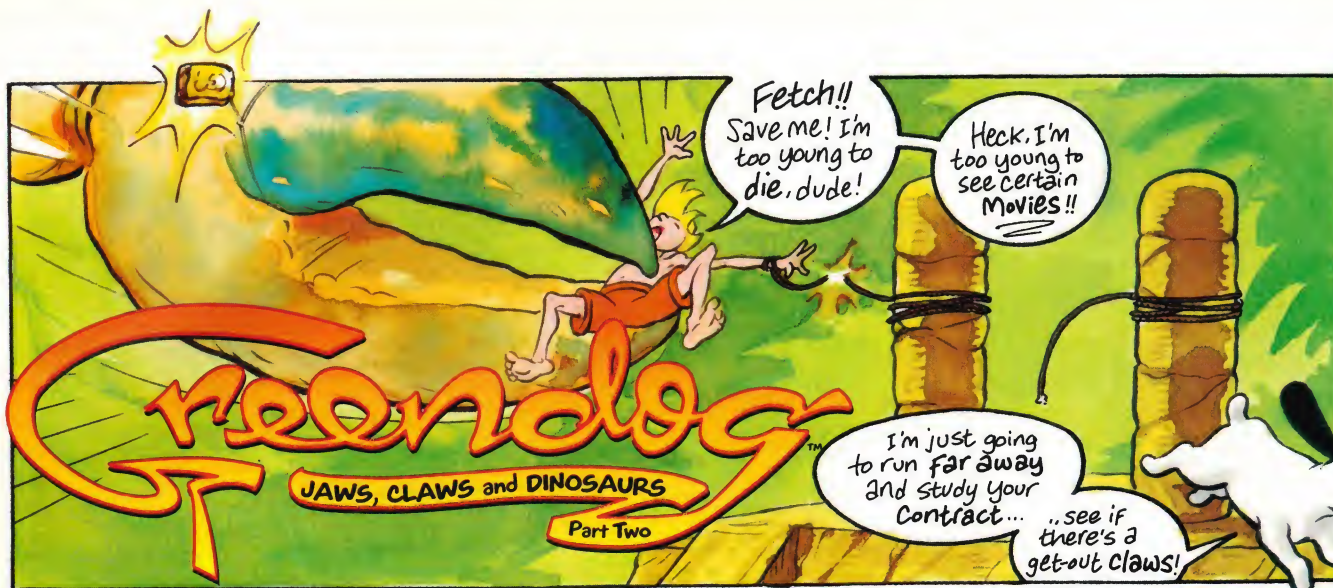
The 3DO is completely expandable. Totally revampable. One hundred percent changeable. Check out the following add-ons coming this way soon:

- **MODEM** This will allow you to engage your 'chums' in combat over the phone line.
- **VOICESYNC** Same as the above but has a voice line so you can fight *and* insult your chums simultaneously.
- **CONTROLLERS** Forthcoming variations on the joystick theme include a keyboard, a mouse, a joystick and a trackball.
- **3D GLASSES** Weird stereoscopic glasses for that 'out of the TV and into your lap' games experience.
- **VIDEO EFFECTS PROCESSOR** A slot-in device so you can use the 3DO effects processor to add professional effects to your home videos.
- **MPEG CARTRIDGE** This will allow you to watch blockbuster movies on CD.
- **MIDI CONNECTOR** To turn your 3DO into a music-workstation.
- **PORTABLE 3DO** A handheld version of the 3DO so you can annoy people on the train.
- **3DO CARD** Slottable into a PC to allow you to play 3DO games on your dad's computer.
- **A MILLION GAMES** including *Star Control II*, *Night Trap*, *Out Of This World*, *Super Wing Commander*, *Lemmings*, *Dragon's Lair*, *Star Trek: The Next Generation* and *Demolition Man*.



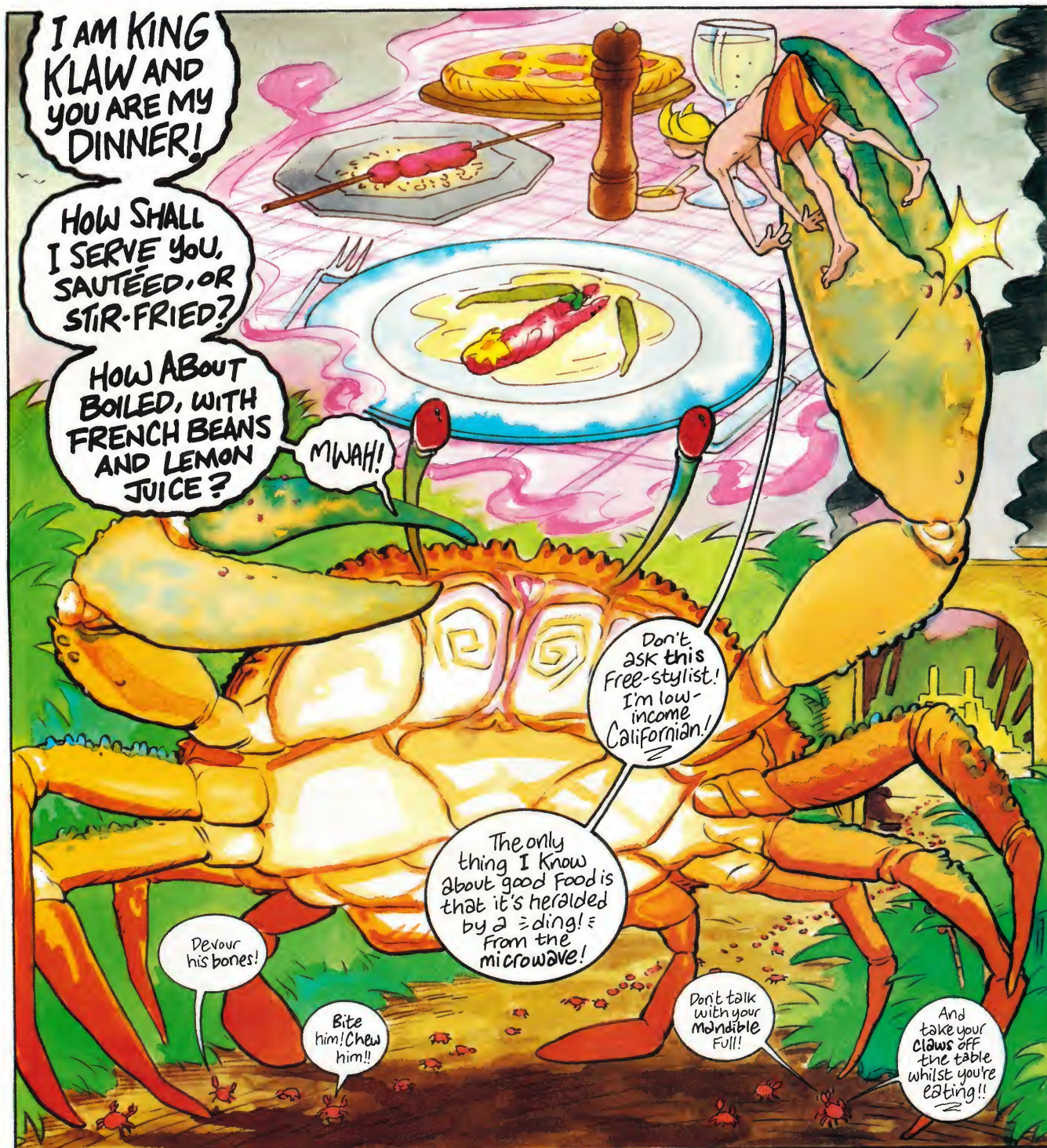
GET IT HERE

The *Panasonic REAL* is only available on import at the moment, priced at a staggering £699 (phone the Tottenham Court Road Computer Exchange 071-916-3110 for more details). Four more 3DO machines will come out later in the year, which should bring the price down in time for the official UK release in May. Games will be £40 and will be playable on both US and European machines.

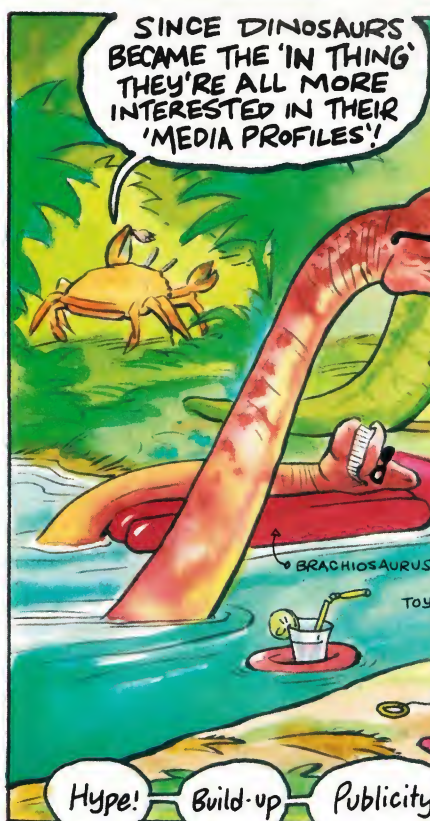
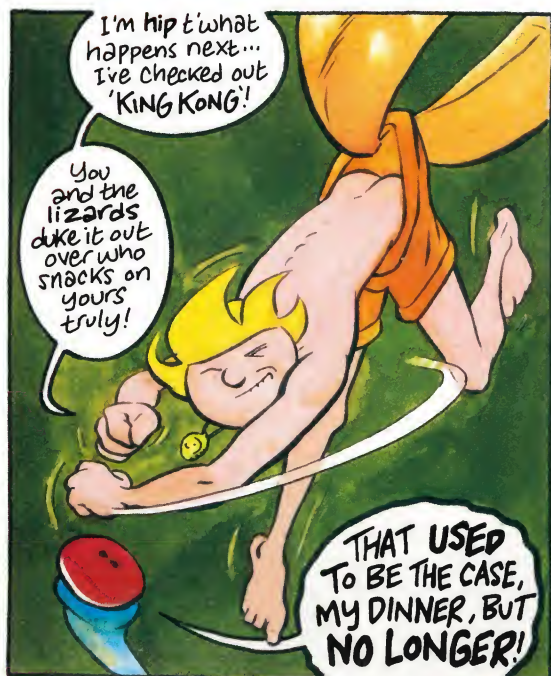
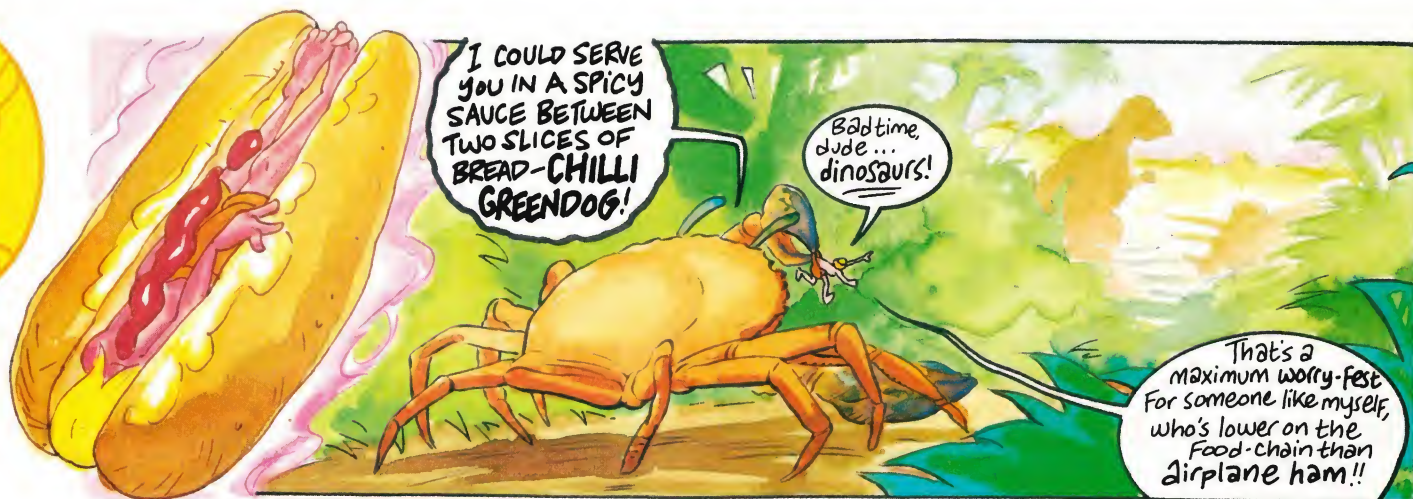


Greendog

In last issue's thrilling installment, we saw our hero and his faithful pooch Fetch crash-land on a desert island to escape the frenzied fish who were attacking Greendog due to the Curse Of The Mystic Pendant. The island turned out to be the lair of King Klaw, and thousands of tiny crustaceans captured the surfing supremo and brought him before the gigantic crab. Dangling from Klaw's claw is a fragment of the Surfboard Of The Ancients, the only artefact which can free Greendog from the Curse ...



IAN CARNEY
Writer
ILYA
Artist

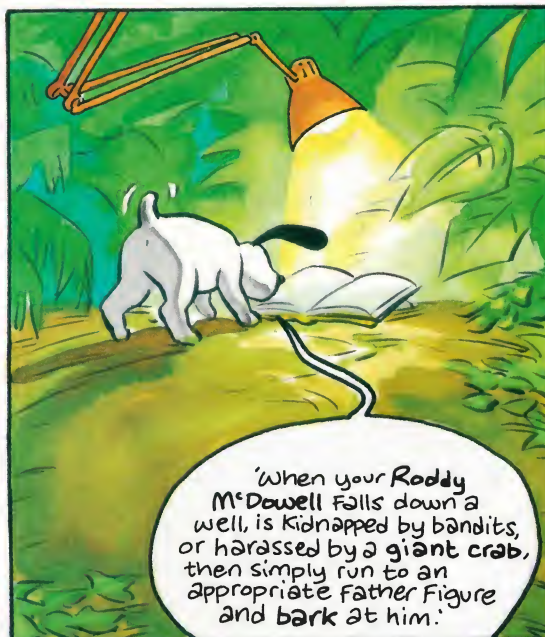


MEANWHILE...

I've got to rescue Greendog!

Maybe there's some advice in this dog-eared copy of Kitty Kelly's 'LASSIE' biography!

Let's see ... APPENDIX 'B': 'RODDY M'DOWELL RESCUE PROCEDURE' ...



'When your Roddy M'Dowell falls down a well, is kidnapped by bandits, or harassed by a giant crab, then simply run to an appropriate Father Figure and bark at him.'



'He will follow you to the scene of the conflict and rescue your Roddy M'Dowell, who will grow up to be known as 'that monkey guy' ...

'This technique is also suitable for use by dolphins, horses and bush kangaroos'

Feh

SLAM!



That's no use at all!

The only Father-Figure in my life was put down for fouling the footpath!

No, what I need is something like a natural-growing crab repellent, sniff, the aforementioned big stick sniff, or...



... A PAY-PHONE!

That gives me an idea that'll save Greendog — AND secure that surf-board fragment!



Hello, operator?

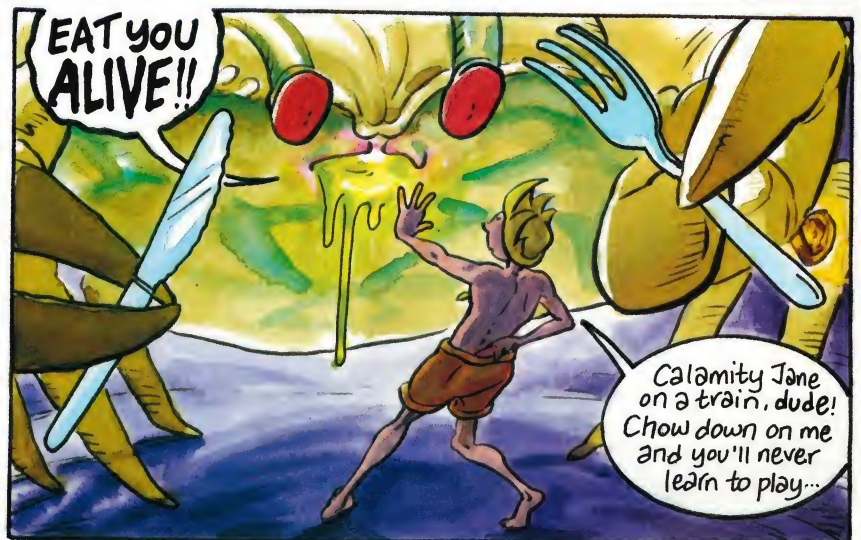
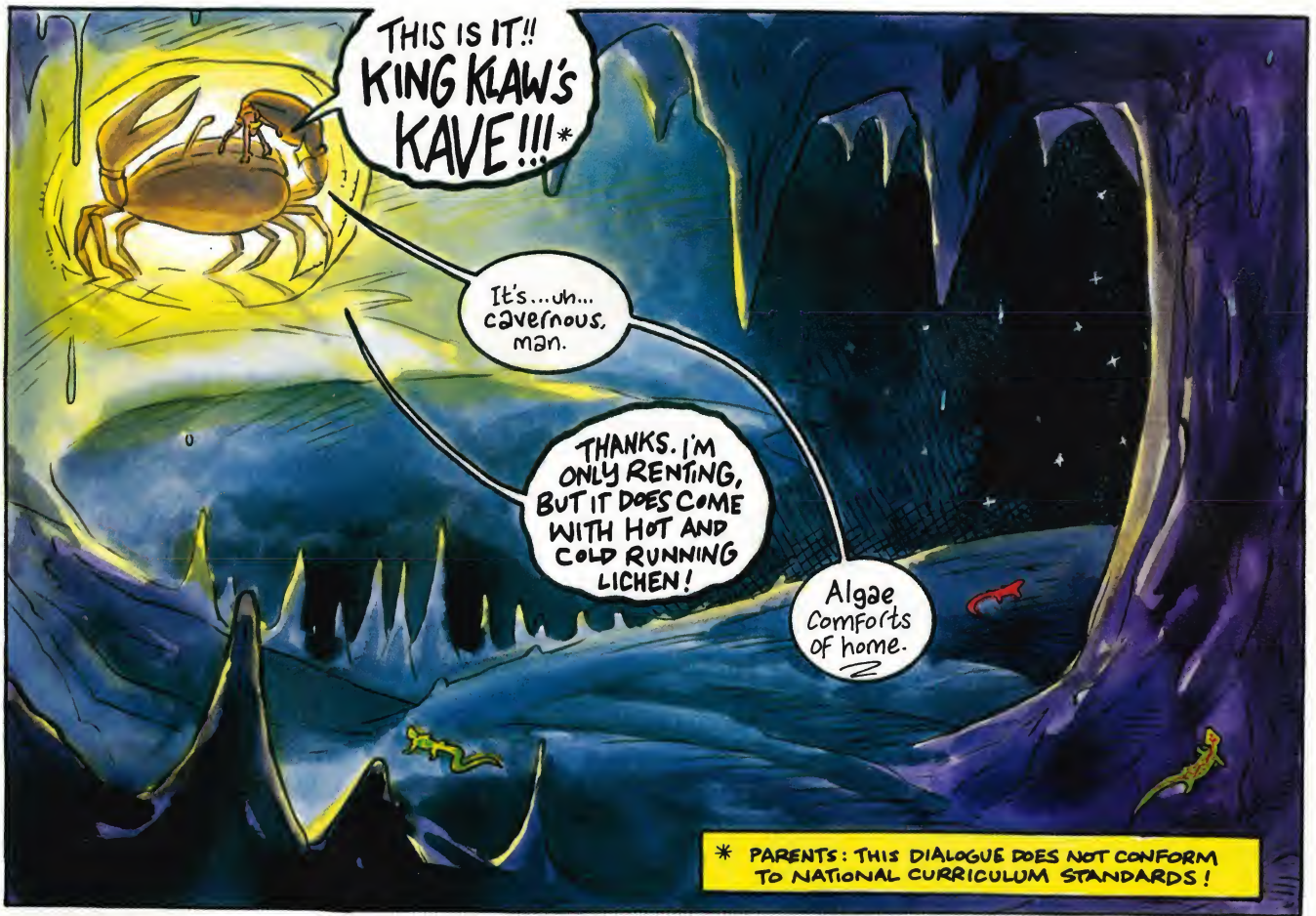
Yes, I'd like to call collect...



Used up more of your lives than you care to mention? Well, follow this tip for the route to Instant Enlightenment and Infinite Lives ...



On Level One, the Cavern Stage, jump over the spikes and on to the Floating Stone. Then jump onto the next stone — if any frogs are coming for you, make sure you kill 'em ...

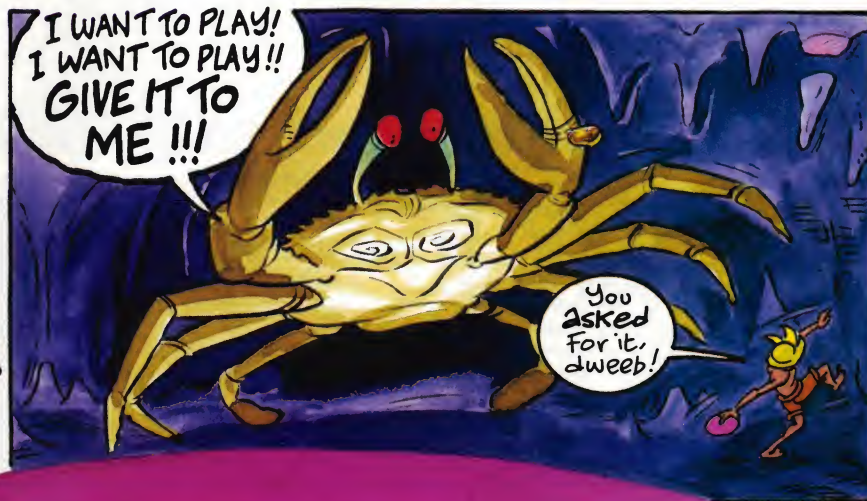




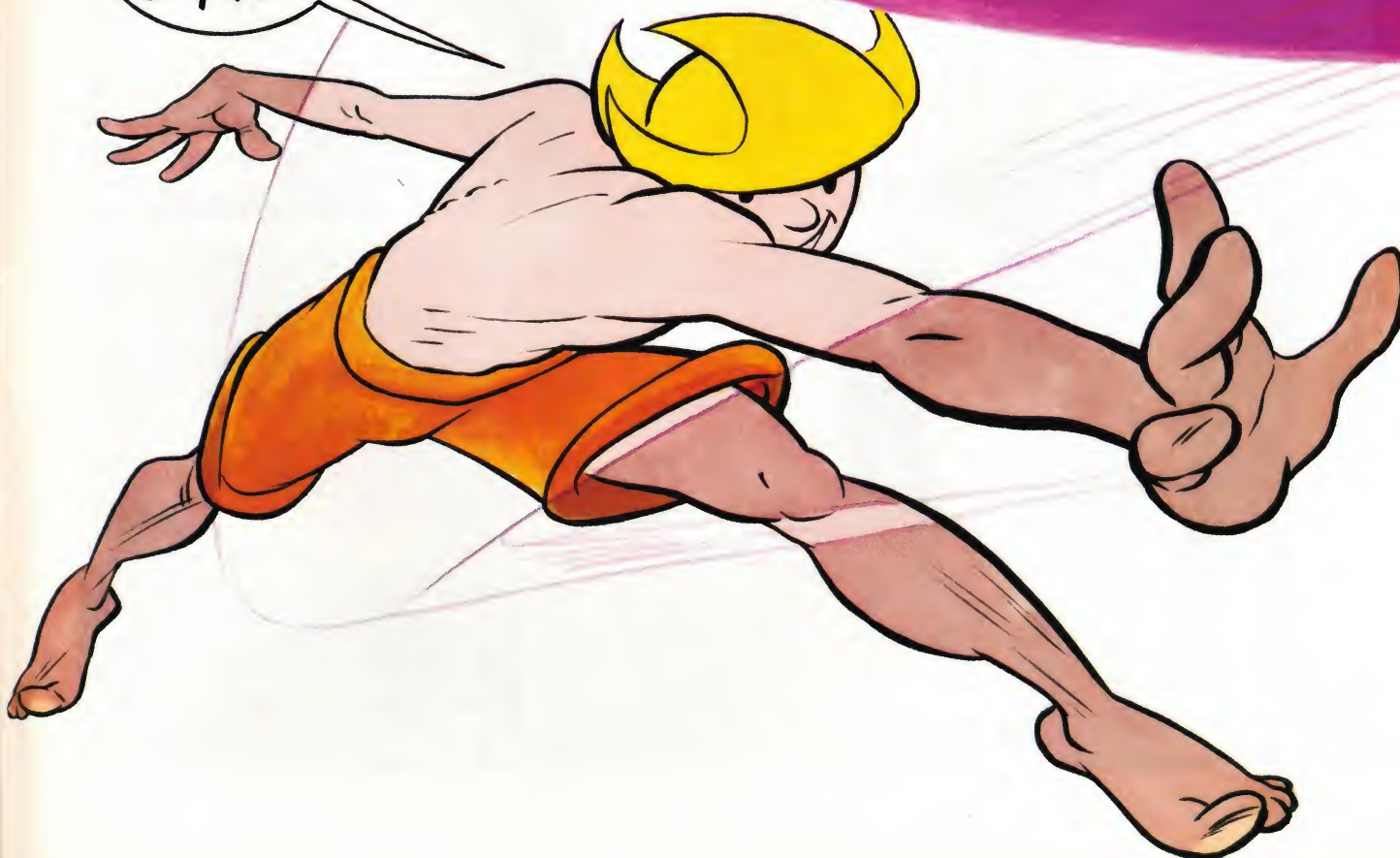
WHUPA WHUPA WHUP



... Keep jumping to the left, then throw your frisbee into the mouth of the Dragon ...

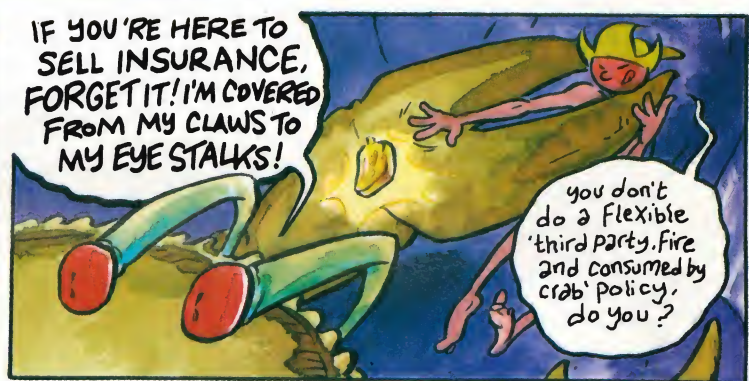


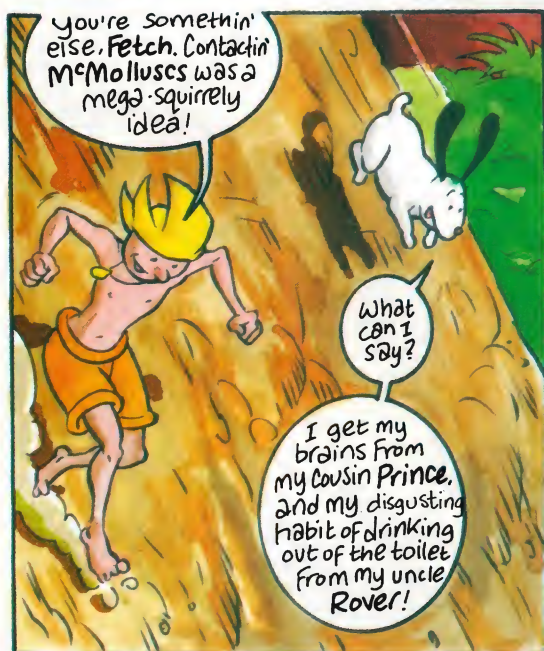
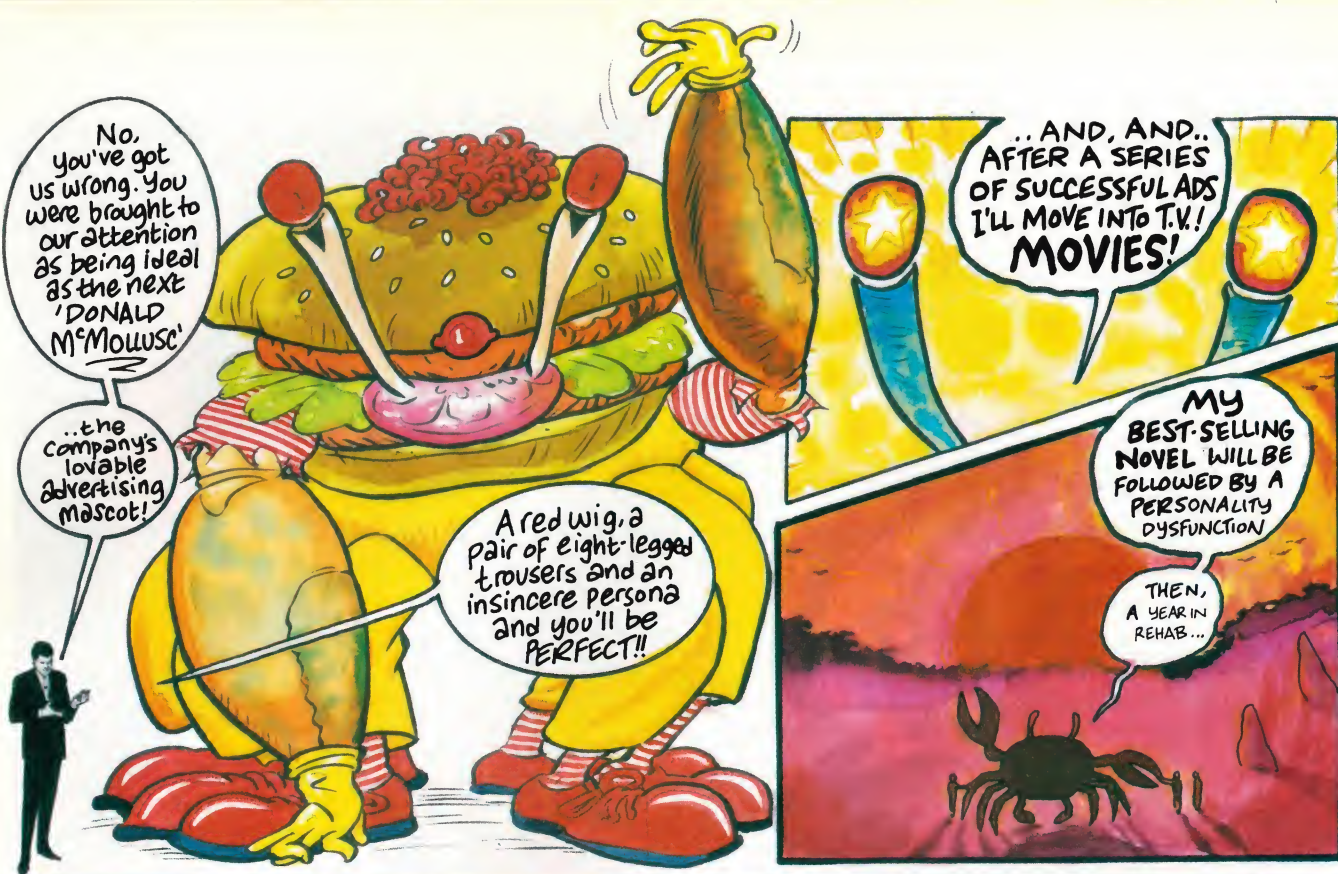
EAT POLY-CARBON!!



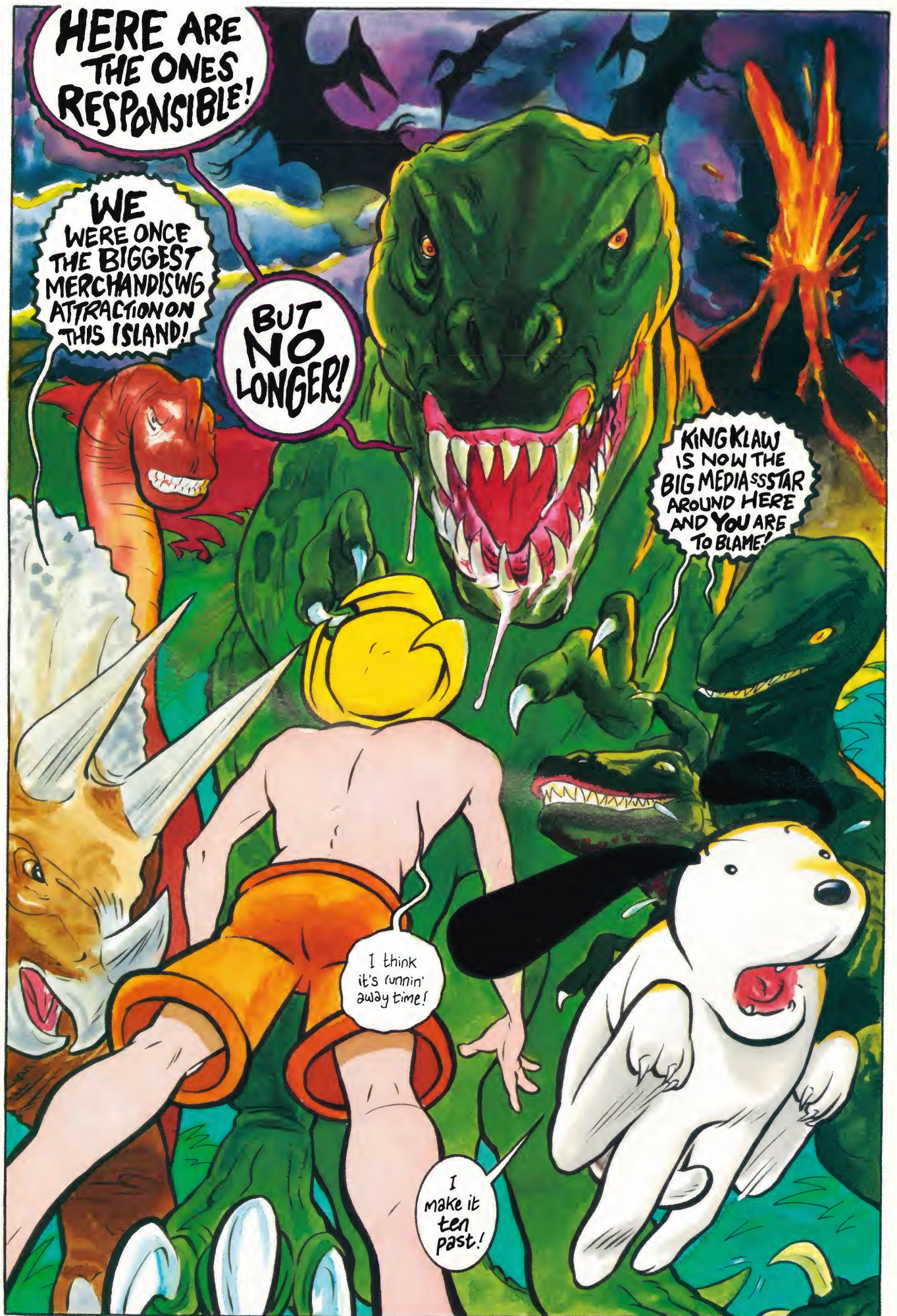


... This will reveal a secret room. Make your way inside, jumping over any gaps, until you get to a Spring which will catapult you onto the top of a hidden treasure chest ...





... Blast this, and a 'Continue' will be revealed. Now you've got to (gulp) 'kill' Greendog, and keep coming back to the same spot until you've got enough 'Continues' to complete the game.



WHEN MAX MET BARNEY

The MAX OVERLOAD
offices were overrun last month when a film crew from *Sky Television's GAMES WORLD* came down to do a report on the making of the comic.

Under the somewhat anarchic leadership of Big Boy Barry, and his ever untrustworthy sidekick Lesley (a.k.a. Sadman), the *Hewland International* team brought the traffic to a standstill in Underwood Street, regaling our TOE-JAM & EARL scribes (Anne Caulfield and Woodrow Phoenix) with questions about how to make a comic strip out of a computer game, and assaulting our publicity-shy designer Nigel Davies with most improper suggestions (including promises of an all-expenses-paid trip to Istanbul).

Even editor Dick Hansom made an effort, bringing his "weddings only" suit out of mothballs and squeezing into a pair of black, sensible shoes several sizes too small for him. Power dressing will never be the same again.

For those of you with round pointy things stuck on your walls, the programme went out on Tuesday 1st March. Plans to release the whole epic on video, though, have run into problems with the Video Standards Council.



Anne Caulfield (left) contemplates a few re-writes to her script, and Woodrow Phoenix wouldn't dare disagree.



The camera crew invades.



Great Super Heroes Of Our Time: Sadman confronts the evil Soundman and his Super-Destructo Ray!



What Big Boy Barry says, Big Boy Barry gets!



Holy juvenile delinquency! The true identity of Sadman exposed! Anne Caulfield captures the moment on film.



Barry and Lesley relax off-set (snigger, snigger).

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